



GENESIS



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GENESIS

FOREWORD

Dear Readers,

On behalf of the U.S. Embassy in Bandar Seri Begawan, I am honored to introduce "Genesis," a modern folktale set in Borneo that centers on six young people locked at home yet undergoing the adventure of a lifetime.

The story's theme of youth resiliency in the face of a changing climate could not be timelier, and the U.S. Embassy is especially proud to support this initiative through our Small Grants Program.

"Genesis" intends to inspire Bruneian youth to lead amid adversity, take care of their mental health, and protect their environment. I have always believed that experiences are powerful, and by sharing our stories we build mutual understanding and strengthen the robust relationship the United States of America and Brunei Darussalam share.

Speaking of developing young leaders, please check out our U.S. exchange programs like the Young Southeast Asian Leadership Initiative (YSEALI), the Southeast Asia Youth Leadership Program (SEAYLP), and the Fulbright Program.

These programs enhance skills for civic, private-sector, and governmental leaders, and motivate youth to work together across borders to solve regional challenges. Participation can lead to a lasting contribution to your community, Brunei, and Southeast Asia for decades to come.

A huge congratulations to the AD Comics team (Khai, Adi, Azim, Hanis, Richard, Farhan and Kelvin) for all the hard work they undertook to bring "Genesis" to life. This story was conceived during the peak of the global COVID-19 pandemic – a period that undoubtedly influenced each of us and one that we will remember for years to come. I hope you enjoy reading this story as much as I know they enjoyed creating it.

Selamat membaca!

Best wishes,
Caryn R. McClelland
U.S. Ambassador to Brunei Darussalam



From the team.

Dear Readers,

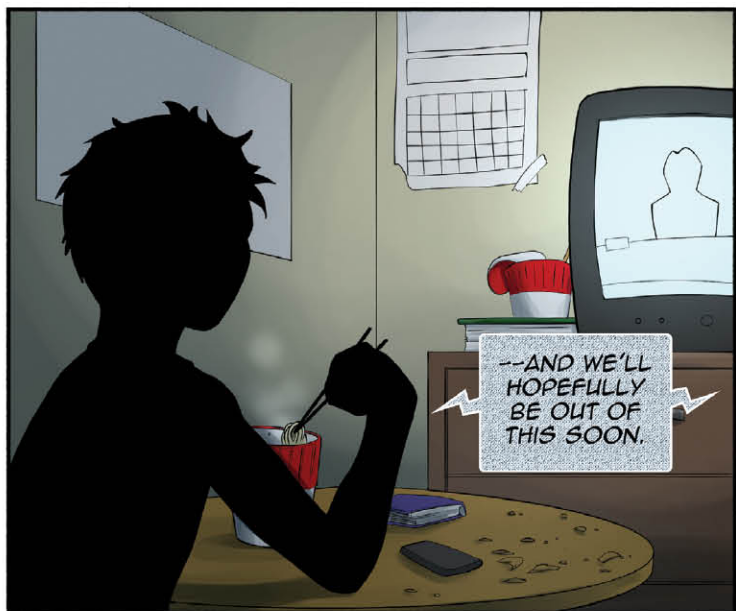
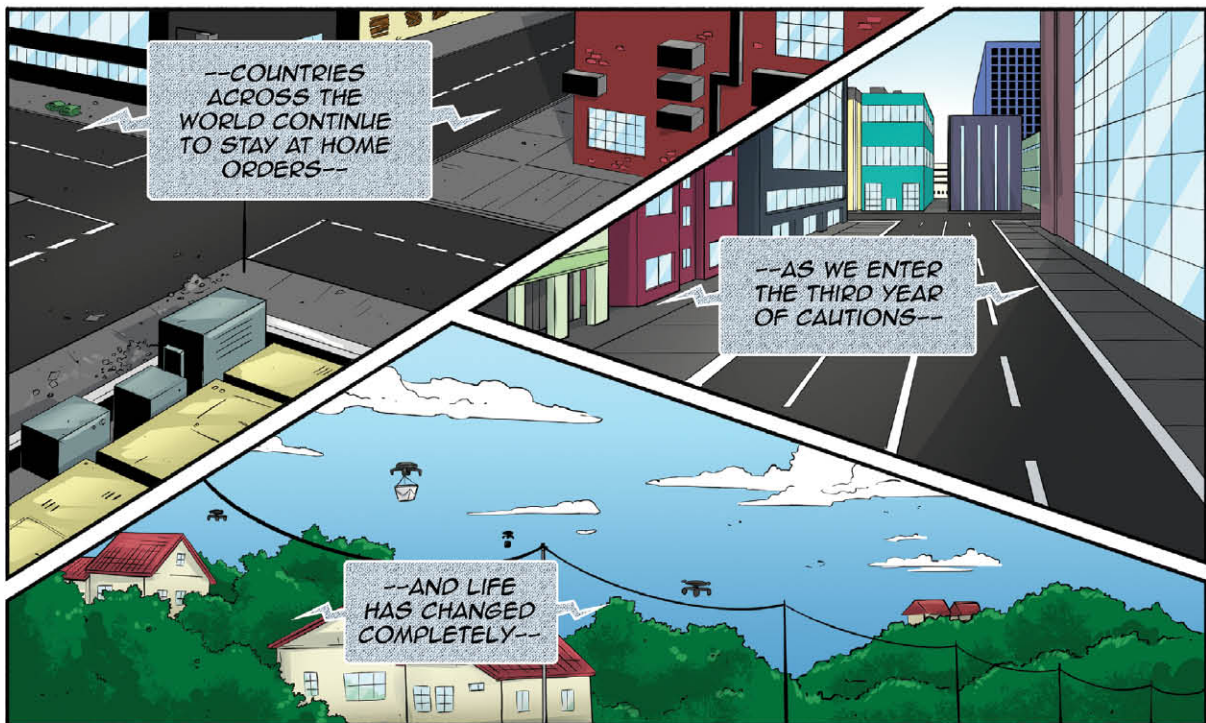
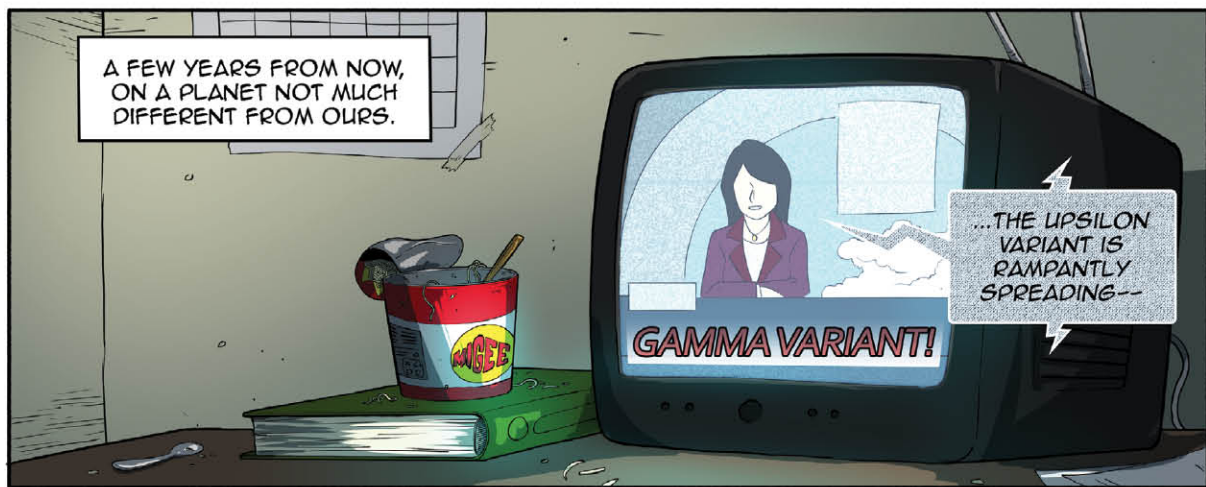
What you hold in your hand is a labor of love from a bunch of creatives in Brunei who wanted to create and tell a story that could resonate with people from all walks of life especially in the years since we saw how unprepared we are for instances when nature reminds us of our actions, as it has in the last couple of years. Genesis is a story about the youth and it was created to remind us that someday they will lead the charge on every front, from running the planet to metaphorically saving it. And just as we bequeath this story to you, let us try to give our children and those after them, a planet that isn't beyond saving.

We would like to offer our sincere thanks to you, the reader, for taking the time to read this story and we hope you share it to those around you and they do the same.

Our eternal gratitude also lies with the U.S.. Embassy in Bandar Seri Begawan for supporting this project through the Small Grants Program and bearing with us while we navigated all the obstacles over the past year.

Enjoy the ride,

Khai
Adi
Azim
Hanis
Richard
Farhan
Kelvin.



GENESIS

ACT ONE: STRANGE NEW WORLD

"HOPEFULLY OUT OF THIS SOON".

SIGH!

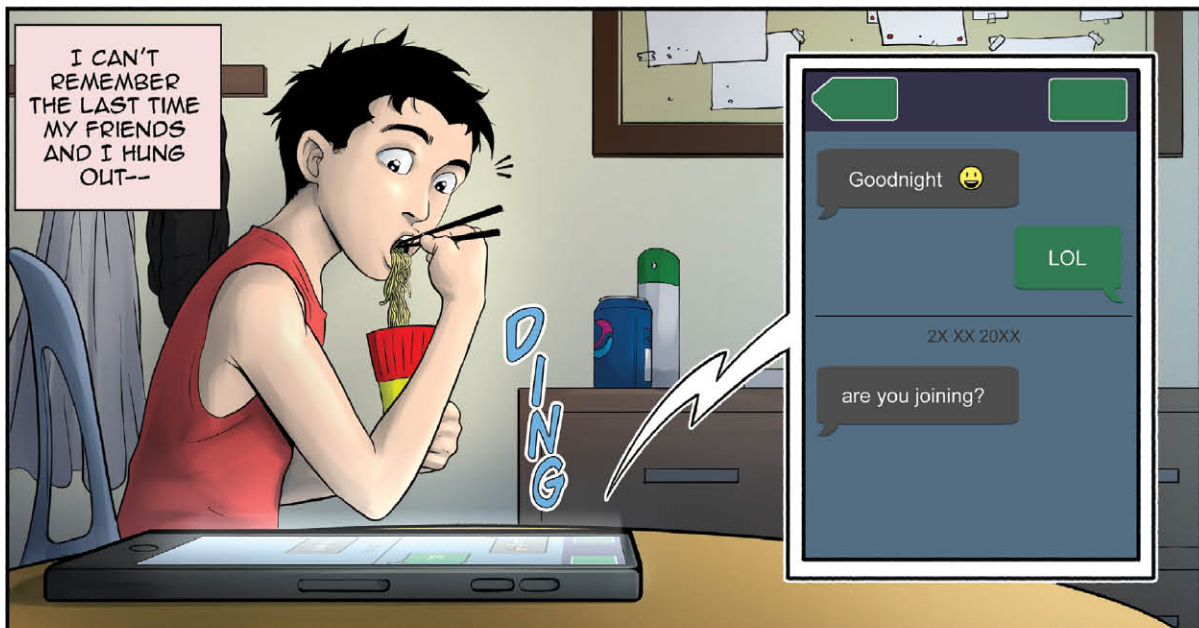
IF I GET A DOLLAR FOR EVERYTIME I HEARD THAT, I WOULD HAVE LOTS OF DOLLARS.

EVERYTHING IS A BLUR. I DON'T KNOW WHAT DAY IT IS.

I MEAN I DO. IT'S SUNDAY. BUT IT FEELS LIKE I DON'T KNOW THE DAY ANYMORE.

IT'S BEEN THIS WAY FOR YEARS. I'VE LOST MY ENTIRE CHILDHOOD.

OKAY THAT'S EXAGGERATING. I'M AN INTROVERT SO I DON'T MIND STAYING AT HOME. BUT I WOULD LIKE THE OPTION OF LEAVING FROM TIME TO TIME.



THIS IS HOW WE
HANG OUT NOW.
AND YOU KNOW
WHAT--

--WITHOUT THESE GUYS,
I PROBABLY WOULD
HAVE BEEN WORSE OFF.

JOIN

JOINING...

HEY GUYS

HEY MARUL!!

WHAT DID YOU
HAVE FOR DINNER?

CLIP
NOODLES

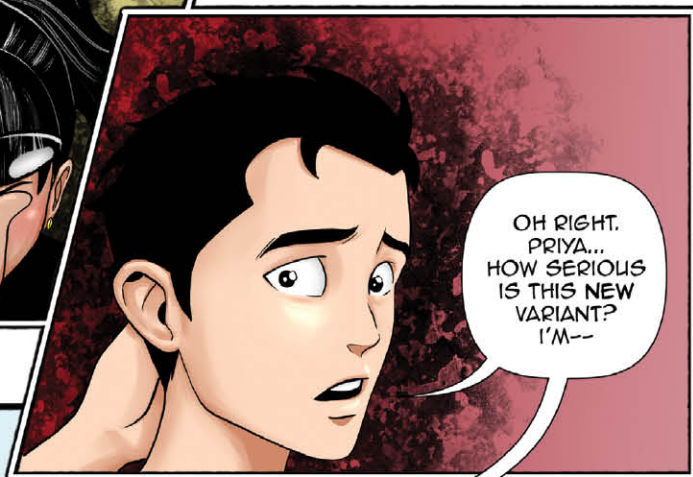
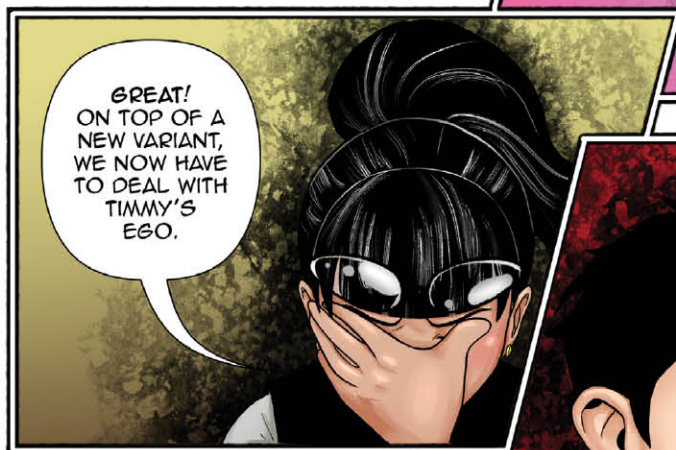
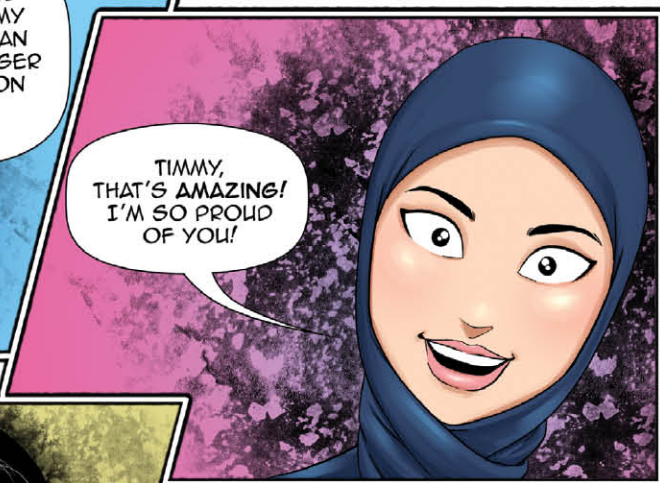
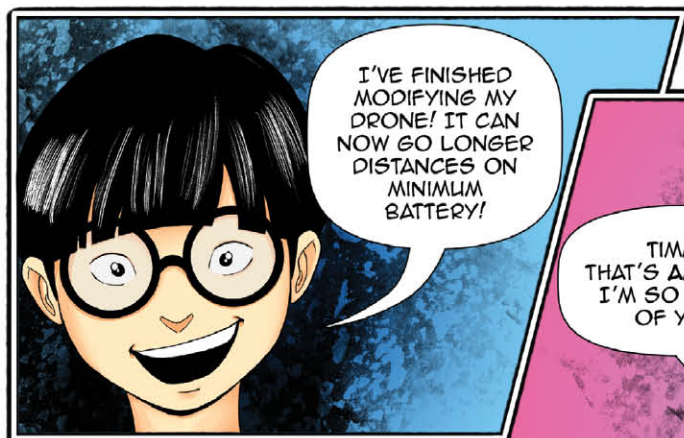
CLIP NOODLES,
AGAIN? HOW
MANY HAVE YOU
HAD THIS WEEK?

ENOUGH ABOUT
MARUL'S DINNER.

TOO
MANY..

GUESS WHAT
I'VE DONE?

WHAT?



I'M SORRY, MARUL. THE TRANSMISSION RATE IS MUCH FASTER AND BASED ON EVERYTHING I'VE READ, THE SYMPTOMS COULD BE... FATAL. I DON'T KNOW IF YOUR PARENTS WILL BE COMING BACK ANYTIME SOON.



MARUL, I'M SO SORRY.

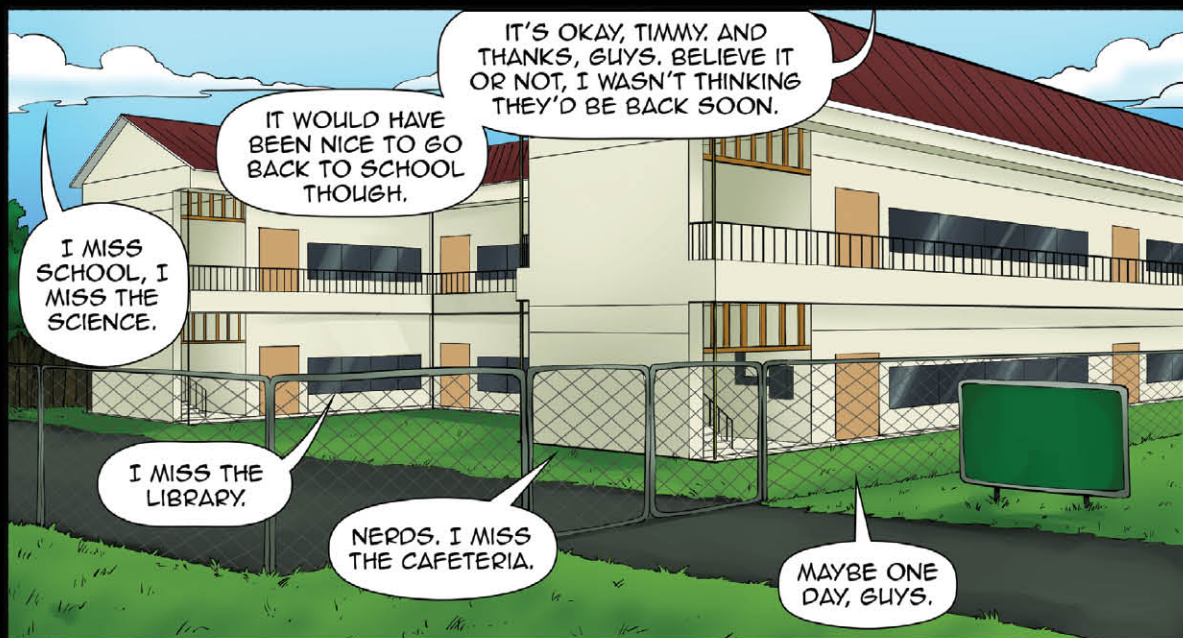
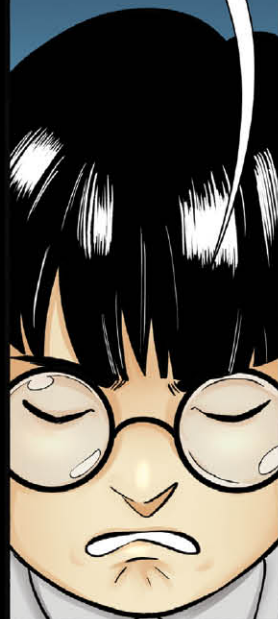


THANKS GUYS.

WELL THAT'S JUST GREAT.



SORRY MARUL. I'LL STOP TALKING ABOUT MY DRONE. THAT WAS SELFISH OF ME.



IT'S OKAY, TIMMY. AND THANKS, GUYS. BELIEVE IT OR NOT, I WASN'T THINKING THEY'D BE BACK SOON.

IT WOULD HAVE BEEN NICE TO GO BACK TO SCHOOL THOUGH.

I MISS SCHOOL, I MISS THE SCIENCE.

I MISS THE LIBRARY.

NERDS. I MISS THE CAFETERIA.

MAYBE ONE DAY, GUYS.



UNTIL THEN, I'LL SEE YOU GUYS HERE. I GOTTA GO CLEAN THE HOUSE.



I'VE GOTTA SET THE TABLE FOR DINNER.

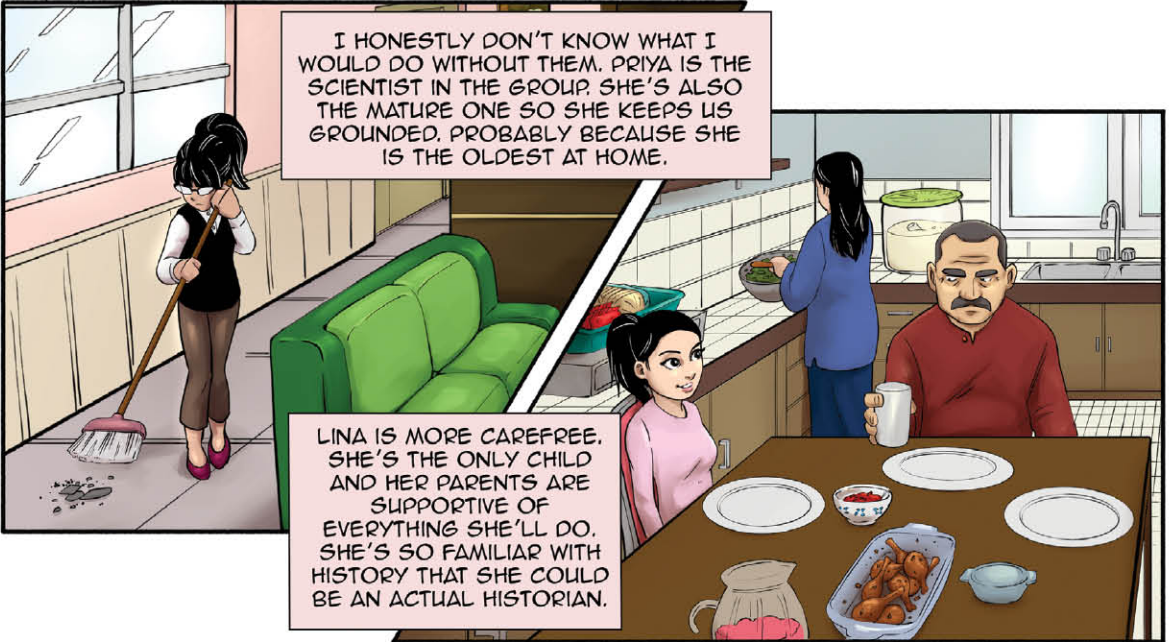


I'LL BE HERE, I'LL MODIFY MY PC.



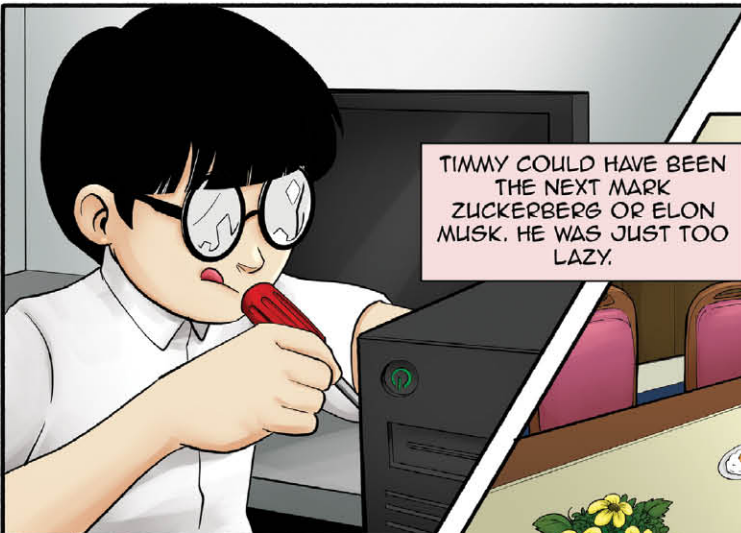
MARUL, DINNER IS READY.

I GUESS THAT'S MY CUE GUYS. I'LL SEE YOU GUYS IN CLASS TOMORROW

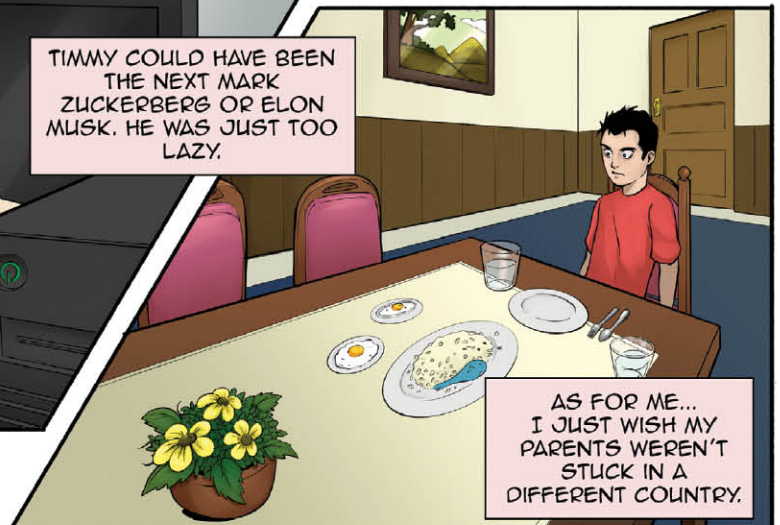


I HONESTLY DON'T KNOW WHAT I WOULD DO WITHOUT THEM. PRIYA IS THE SCIENTIST IN THE GROUP. SHE'S ALSO THE MATURE ONE SO SHE KEEPS US GROUNDED. PROBABLY BECAUSE SHE IS THE OLDEST AT HOME.

LINA IS MORE CAREFREE. SHE'S THE ONLY CHILD AND HER PARENTS ARE SUPPORTIVE OF EVERYTHING SHE'LL DO. SHE'S SO FAMILIAR WITH HISTORY THAT SHE COULD BE AN ACTUAL HISTORIAN.



TIMMY COULD HAVE BEEN THE NEXT MARK ZUCKERBERG OR ELON MUSK. HE WAS JUST TOO LAZY.



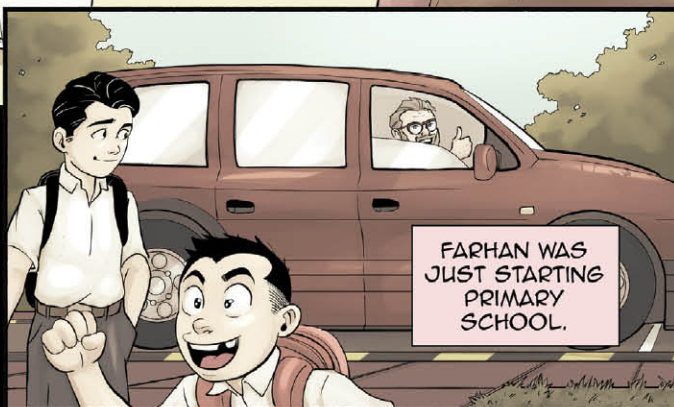
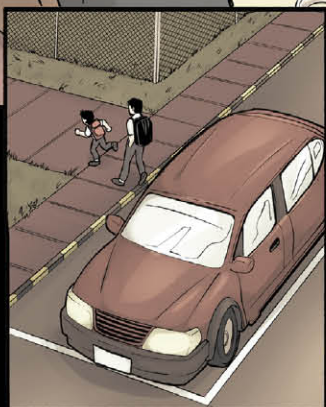
AS FOR ME... I JUST WISH MY PARENTS WEREN'T STUCK IN A DIFFERENT COUNTRY.

I WISH THEY WERE
HERE RIGHT NOW.

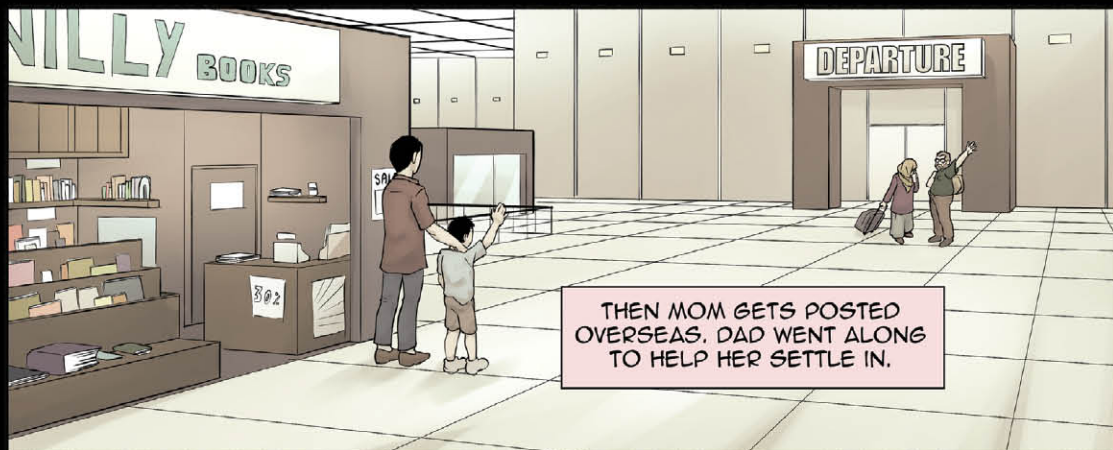
SO I COULD HEAR DAD
TELL ME HOW WORRIED HE
WAS ABOUT MY FUTURE.

SO I COULD TELL
MAMA THAT I MISS
HER FRIED RICE.

IT ALL HAPPENED
SO FAST. ONE
DAY WE'RE HAVING
BREAKFAST. I
HAVE THE WHOLE
OF HIGH-SCHOOL
AHEAD OF ME



FARHAN WAS
JUST STARTING
PRIMARY
SCHOOL.

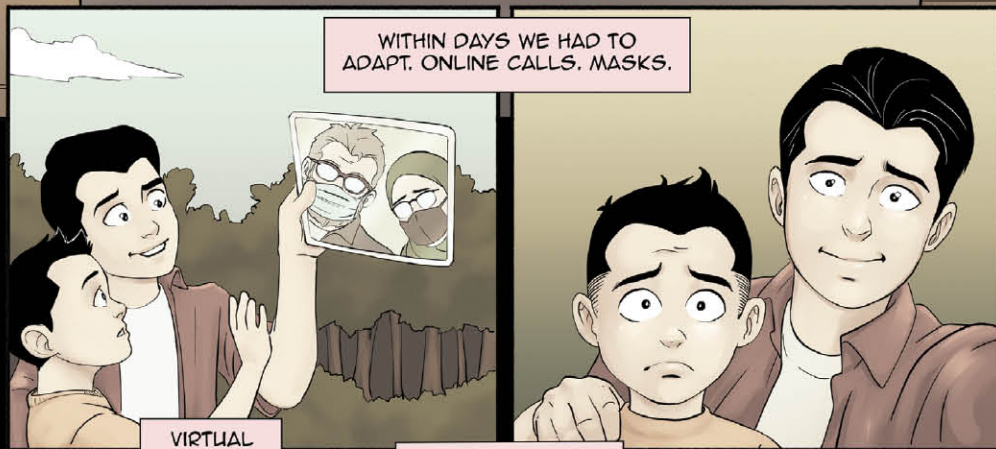


THEN MOM GETS POSTED
OVERSEAS. DAD WENT ALONG
TO HELP HER SETTLE IN.



IT WAS SUPPOSE
TO BE ONE WEEK

NEWS
DEADLY VIRUS

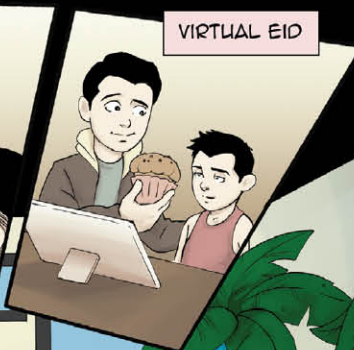


WITHIN DAYS WE HAD TO
ADAPT. ONLINE CALLS, MASKS.

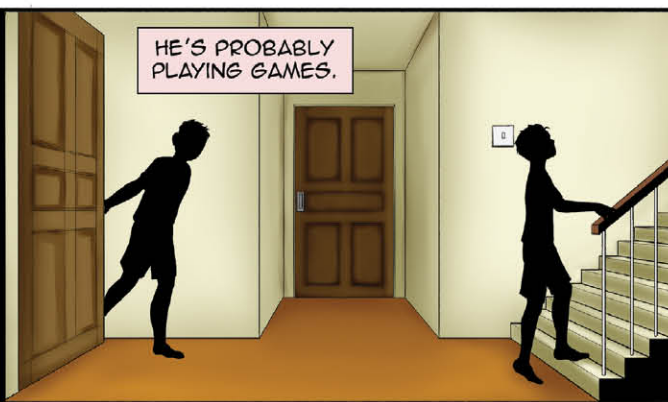
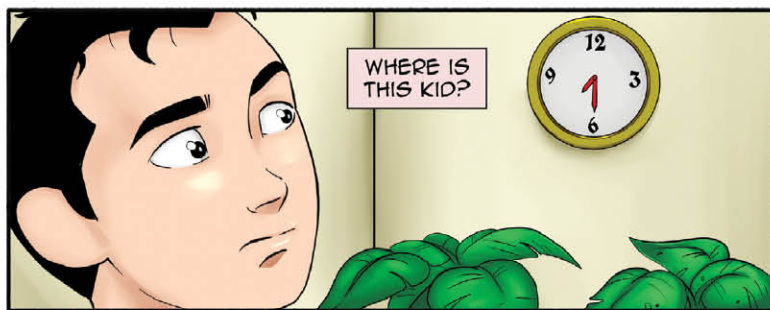
VIRTUAL
BIRTHDAYS.

VIRTUAL DINNERS.

VIRTUAL EID



I USED TO THINK THE
HOUSE WAS SMALL,
BUT WITHOUT MY
PARENTS HERE...
IT FEELS A LITTLE
TOO BIG.







DINNER'S
SERVED.
LET'S GO
TO EAT.



I HEARD
THE NEWS.



SOMETIMES I
FORGET HE'S
STILL A KID.



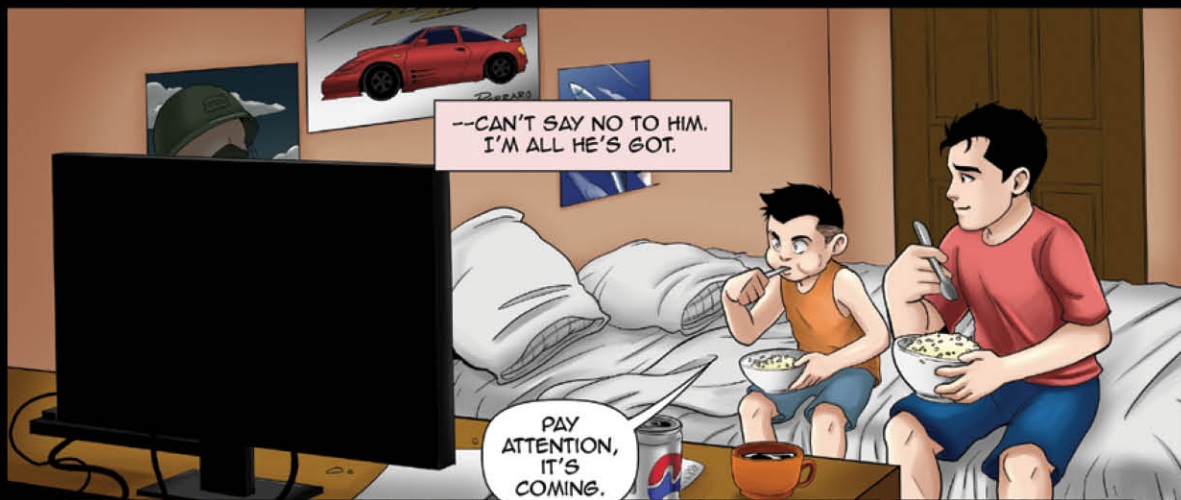
I'LL EAT IF YOU
WATCH VIDEOS
WITH ME IN MY
ROOM.

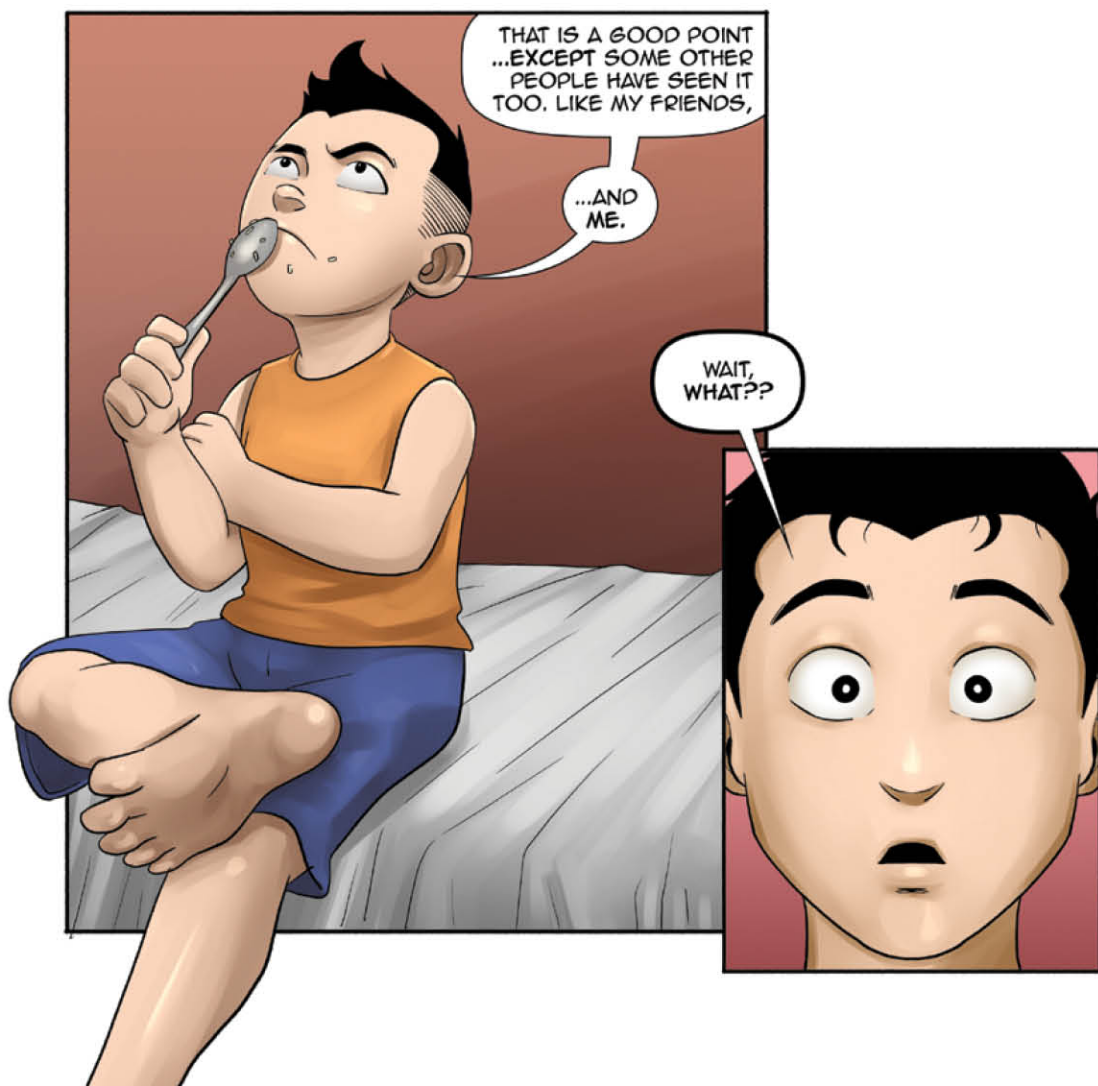
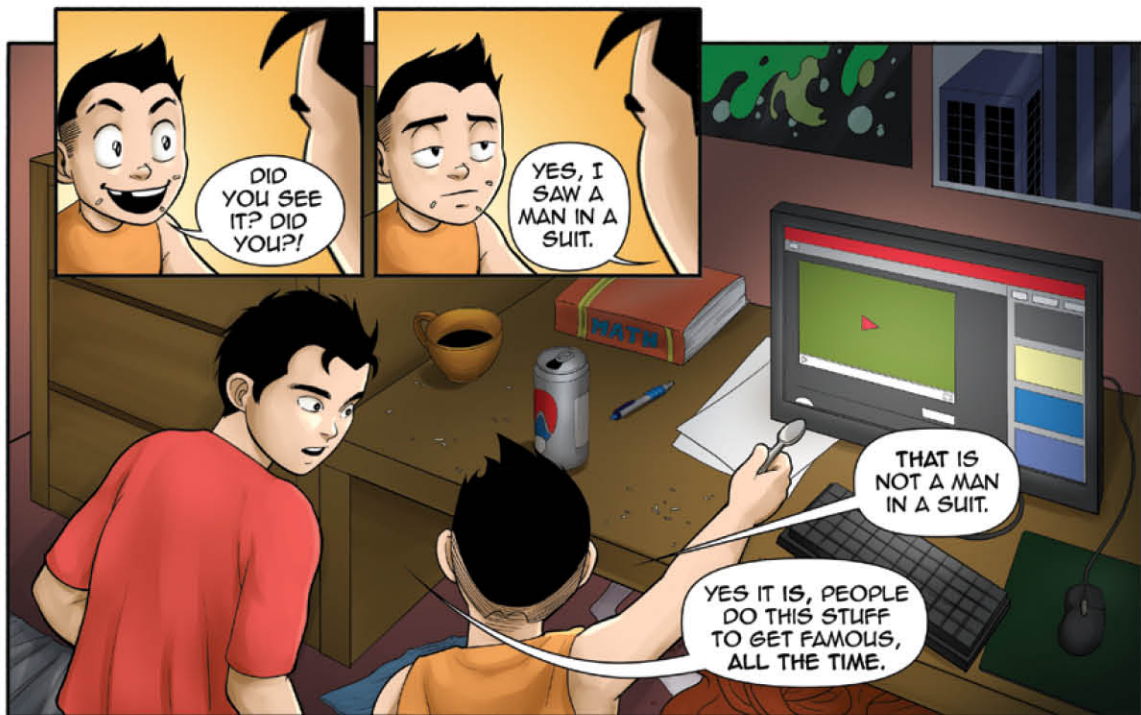


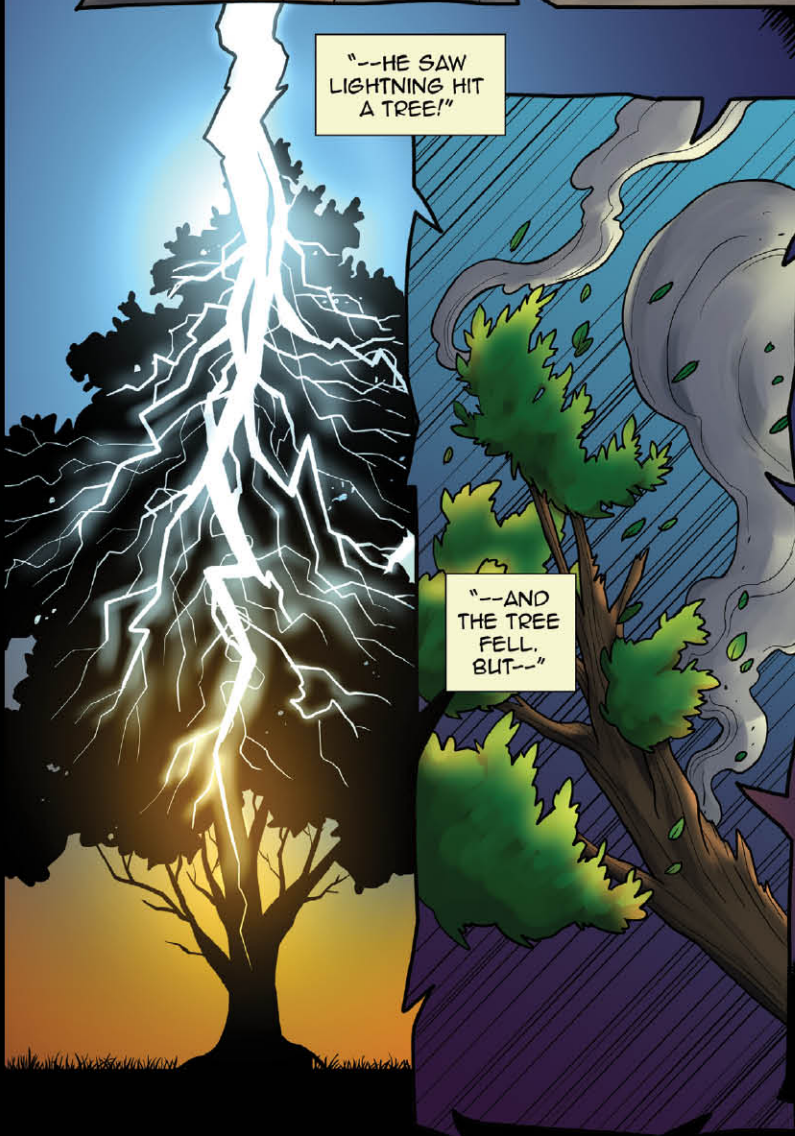
NO, I'M NOT IN
THE MOOD FOR
YOUR KIDDY
VIDEOS.



I--



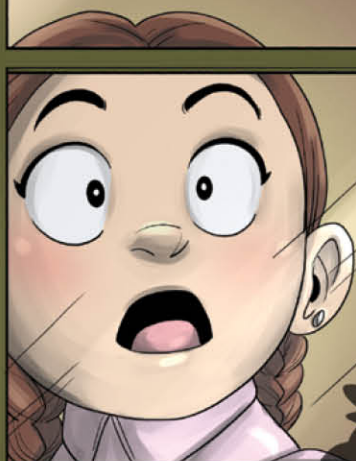




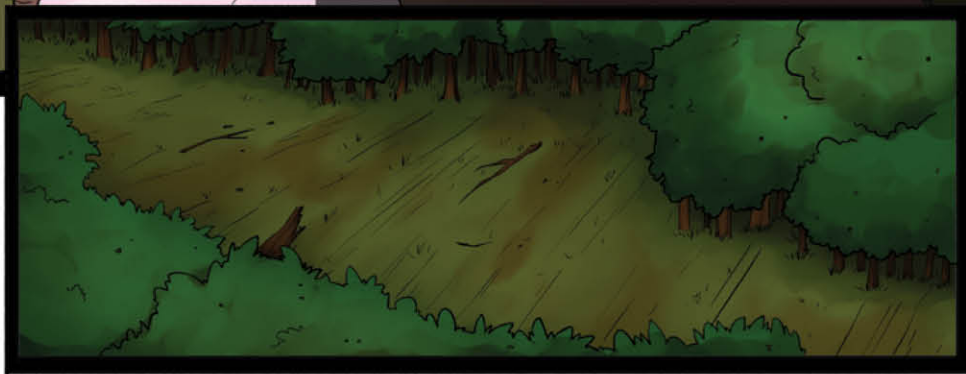
"AND THEN SHIRLEY TOLD ME
THAT HER DOG WAS BARKING AT
SOMETHING IN THE BACKYARD--"



"--SHE SAW
SOMETHING MOVE
IN THE TREES."



"--AND SHE SAW THE
SHADOW OF
SOMETHING HUGE
MOVE NEAR THE
TREES!"





OUTSIDE

SO
YOU'RE
TELLING ME
GINGER IS
MISSING?

IF YOU DON'T
BELIEVE ME,
WE CAN LOOK
FOR HIM.

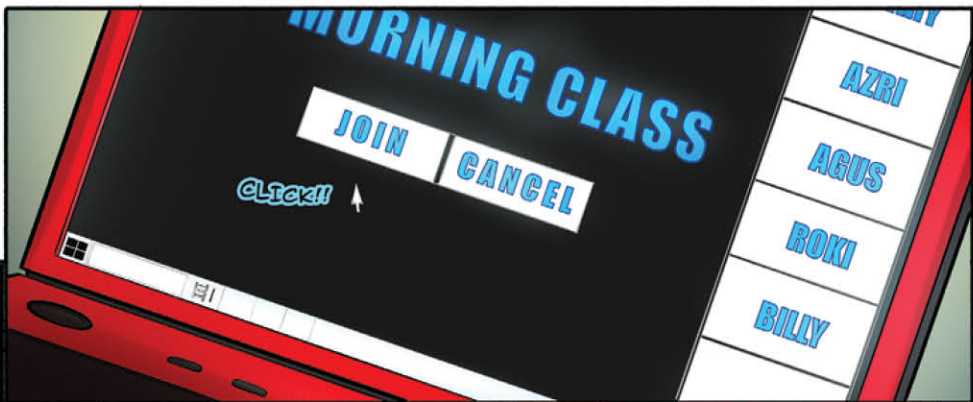
THIRTY MINUTES LATER

DUMB CAT. YOU
BETTER COME
BACK SOON.

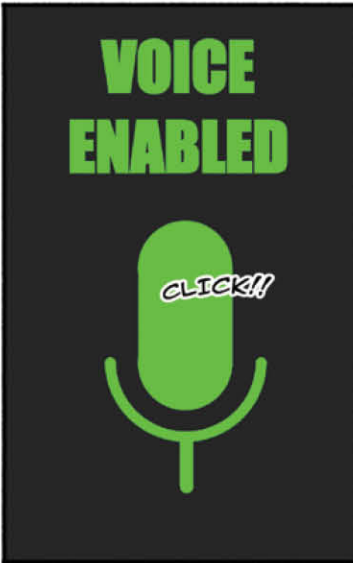
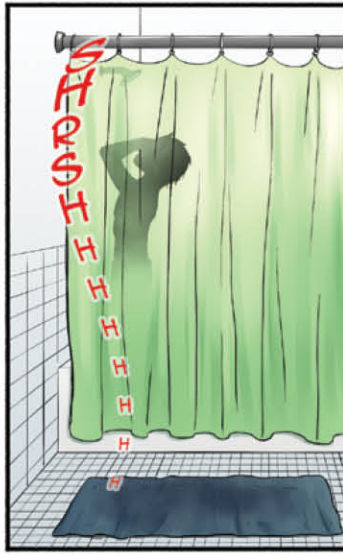
WITHOUT GINGER
FARHAN MAY FEEL
EVEN MORE LONELY.

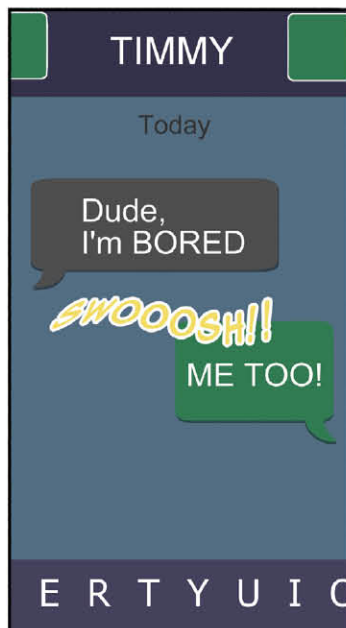
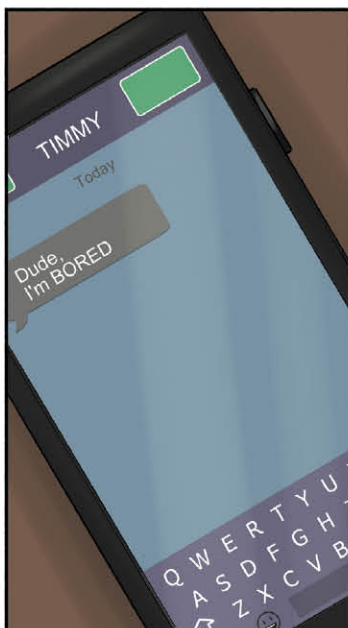
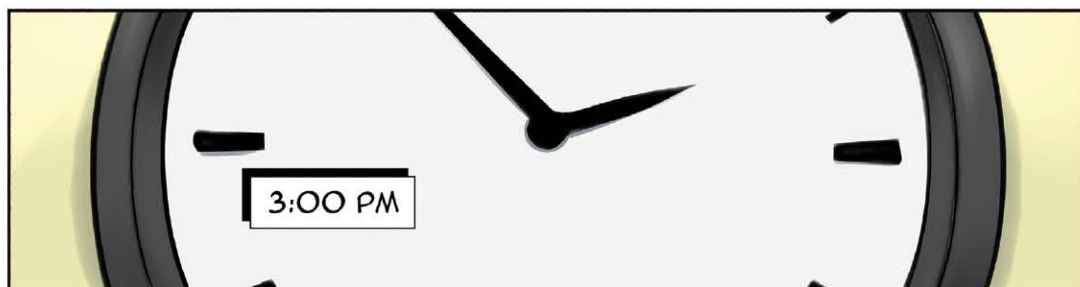
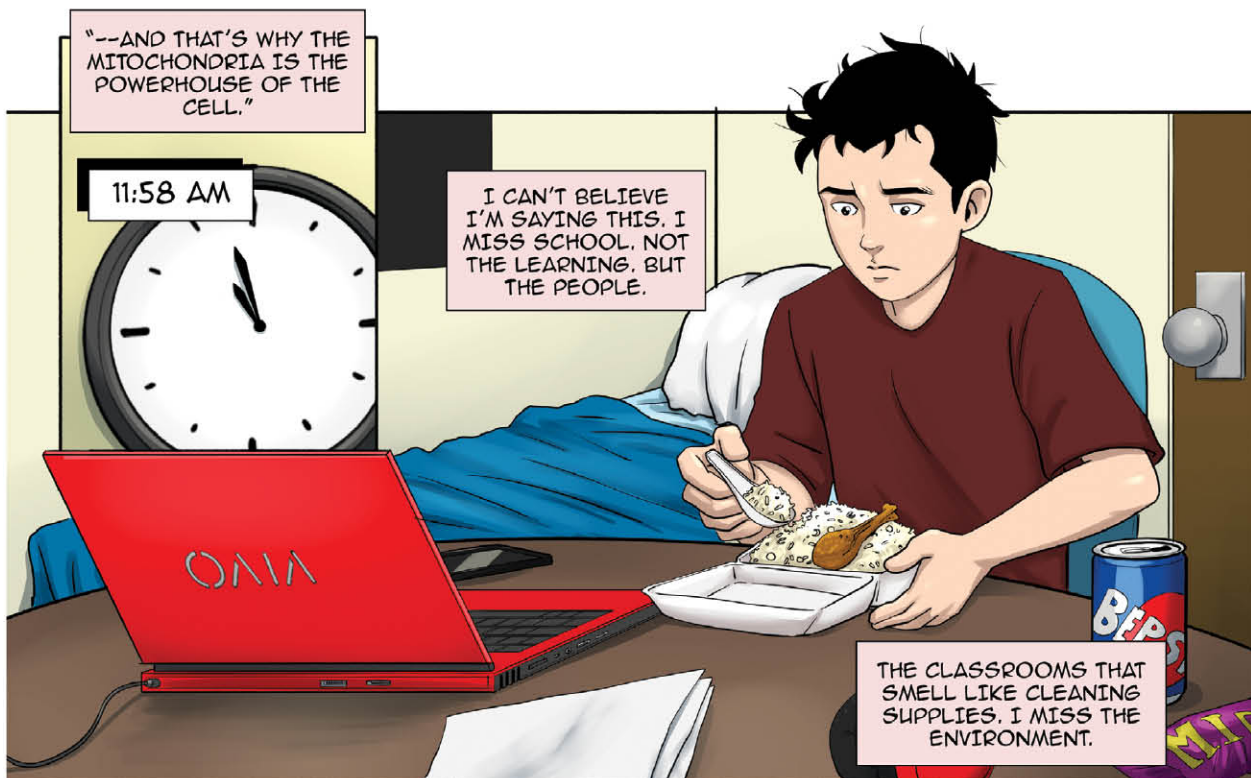
POOR KID'S
BEEN THROUGH
A LOT AS IT IS.

WE ALL HAVE.
HOPEFULLY WE'LL BE
OUT OF THIS SOON.



--THOSE OF YOU WHO'VE
DONE THE HOMEWORK CAN
PRESENT FIRST--





WANT TO SEE A
MAGIC TRICK?

DIING!!!

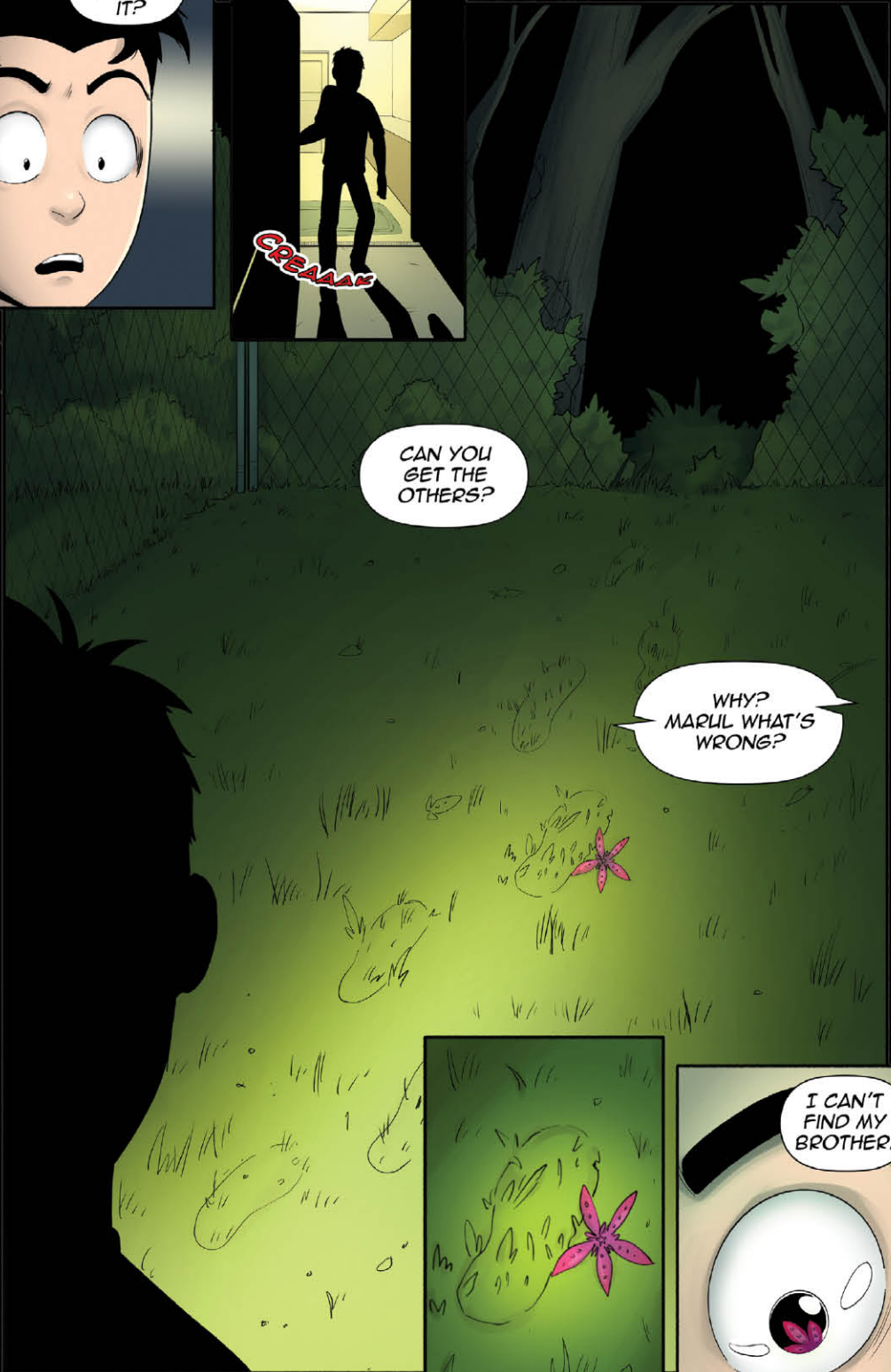
**TEACHER HAS
DISCONNECTED**

**TEACHER HAS
DISCONNECTED**



**MARUL HAS
LEFT**

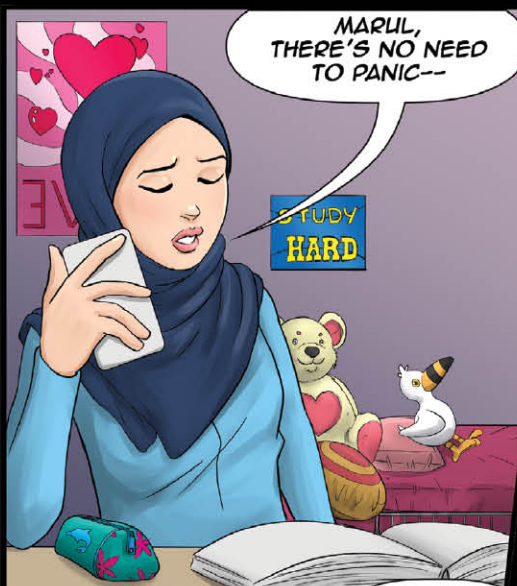




YOU HAVE
CONNECTED
TO
GROUP CHAT



--AND HE SAID
AZIMAN AND
SHIRLEY SAW IT
TOO GUYS! ...I SAW
FOOTSTEPS, AND
THAT FLOWER.
COULD IT BE--



MARUL,
THERE'S NO NEED
TO PANIC--

STUDY
HARD



I'M SURE
FARHAN
DIDN'T GO
TOO FAR--

--AND ALL
THIS COULD BE
THE OVERZEALOUS
IMAGINATION OF
A BUNCH OF
KIDS--

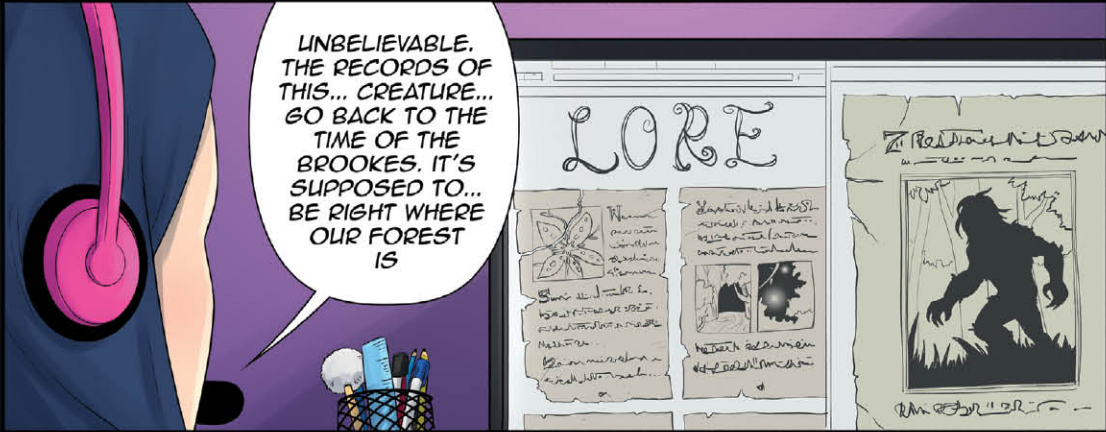


EXCEPT
IT'S NOT.

THERE'S
SOME TRUTH TO
WHAT FARHAN
WAS SAYING.
LOOK AT YOUR
SCREENS--



OH
MY--



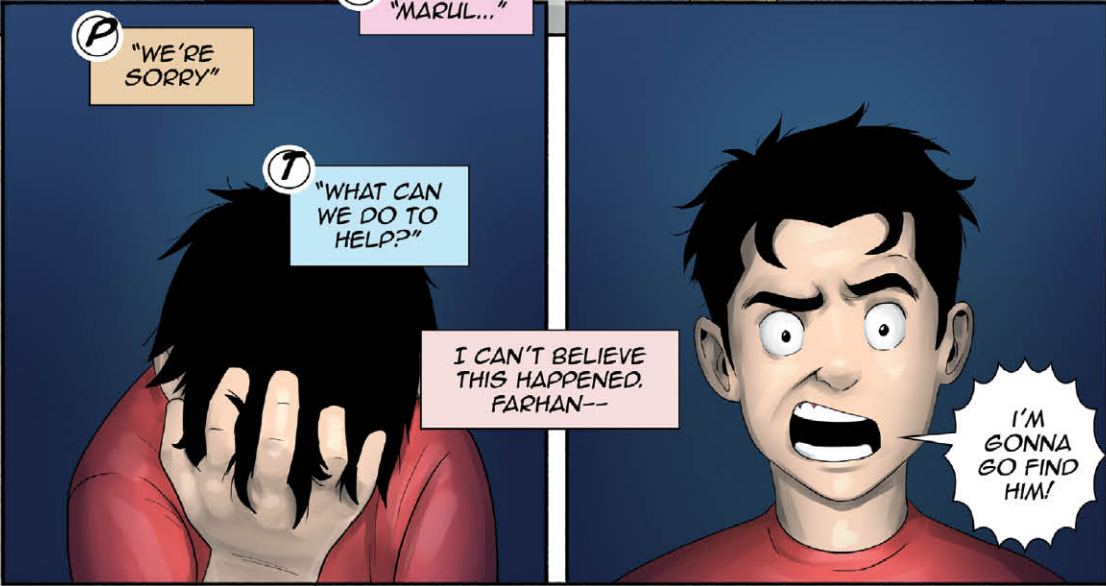
UNBELIEVABLE.
THE RECORDS OF
THIS... CREATURE...
GO BACK TO THE
TIME OF THE
BROOKES. IT'S
SUPPOSED TO...
BE RIGHT WHERE
OUR FOREST
IS



...AND THE
VEGETATION MAP SHOWS THAT
THERE IS A THICKER OUTER LAY OF
VEGETATION IN THE MIDDLE OF THE
FOREST... NO ONE'S BEEN
THERE--

NO ONE,
INDEED

I CAN'T EVEN GET
SATELLITE OR GPS
FEED TO SEE
WHAT'S IN THERE.



P

"WE'RE
SORRY"

L

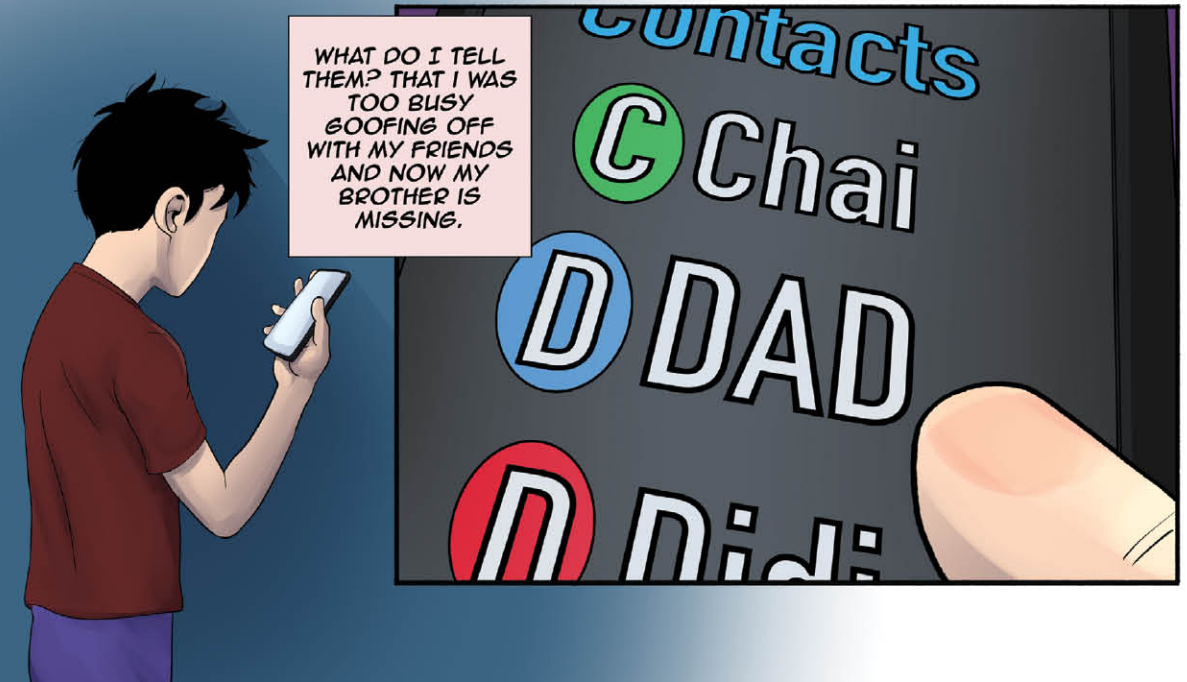
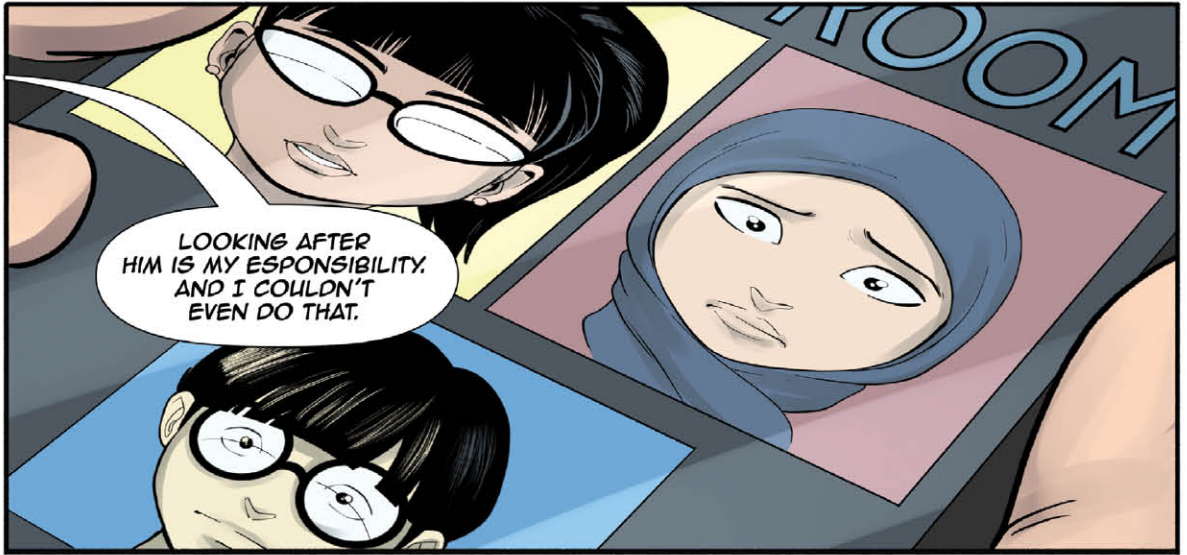
"MARUL..."

T

"WHAT CAN
WE DO TO
HELP?"

I CAN'T BELIEVE
THIS HAPPENED.
FARHAN--

I'M
GONNA
GO FIND
HIM!







GREAT.
PERFECT
TIMING.



HE-
HELLO?



HOW'S
IT GOING,
SON? MAKAN
SUDAH?

I'M FINE.
AWU SUDAH.

GOOD,
HOW WAS
SCHOOL?

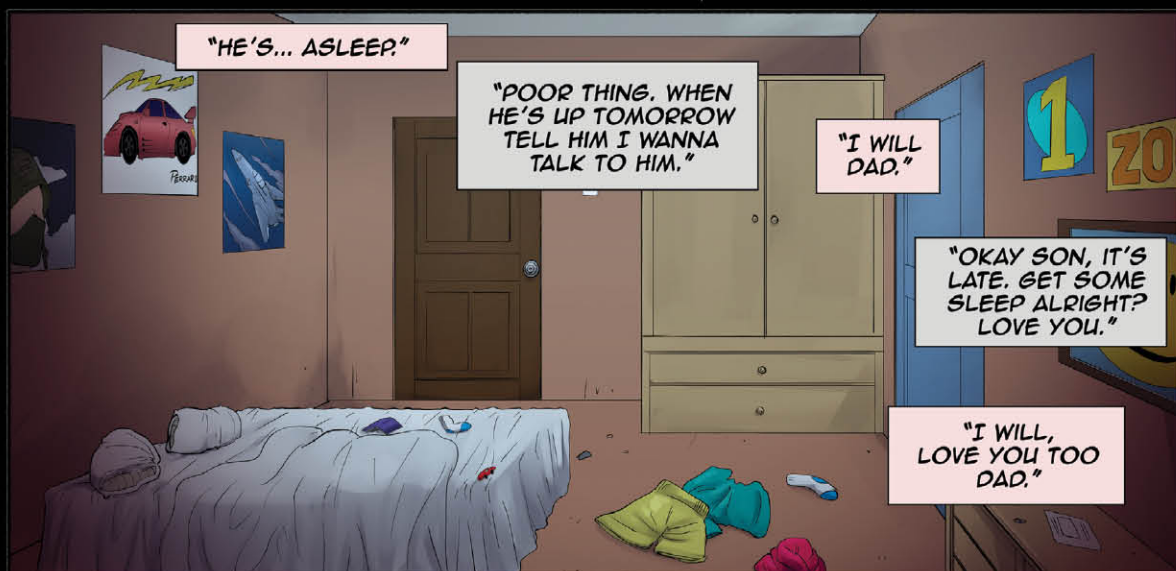
USUAL,
DAD.



SHE'S GOOD,
JUST TIRED.
SHE'S
SLEEPING

HOW'S
MOM?

WHERE'S
FARHAN? I
WANNA SAY
HI.



"HE'S... ASLEEP."

"POOR THING. WHEN
HE'S UP TOMORROW
TELL HIM I WANNA
TALK TO HIM."

"I WILL
DAD."

"OKAY SON, IT'S
LATE. GET SOME
SLEEP ALRIGHT?
LOVE YOU."

"I WILL,
LOVE YOU TOO
DAD."

IF I DIDN'T ALREADY FEEL
BAD, I FEEL WORSE. I
HATE LYING TO MY DAD

CALL
ENDED

I HAVE TO
FIND FARHAN.

BZZZZT

BZZZZT

MARUL
CAN YOU HEAR
ME?

YEAH,
WHAT'S
UP?

I'M USING
MY DRONE TO
LOOK INTO THE
FOREST--

AND?

THERE IS A TRAIL,
RIGHT THROUGH
THE FOREST.

THERE'S BEEN
MOVEMENT. A
LOT OF IT.

THEN THAT
SETTLES IT,
THEN.

SETTLES
WHAT?

NOTHING.

CALL
ENDED

I HAVE
TO DO THIS.

I'VE NOT BEEN OUTSIDE PROPERLY IN YEARS, I KNOW I TECHNICALLY HAVE NO IDEA WHAT I'M DOING--

--BUT THANKS TO MOVIES, I KNOW THE KEY THING IS PACKING RIGHT.

CLEANING SUPPLIES, FOR SAFETY. A BASEBALL BAT FOR SECURITY, FOOD IN CASE I GET HUNGRY, AND THE FLOWER... TO FIND THE MONSTER.

FACE MASK



GLOVES



FACE SHIELD



THERE'S NO TELLING WHEN I'LL BE BACK. AUNTIE WILL HAVE TO TELL MY PARENTS IF I'M NOT BACK BY TOMORROW.



rustle
rustle
rustle

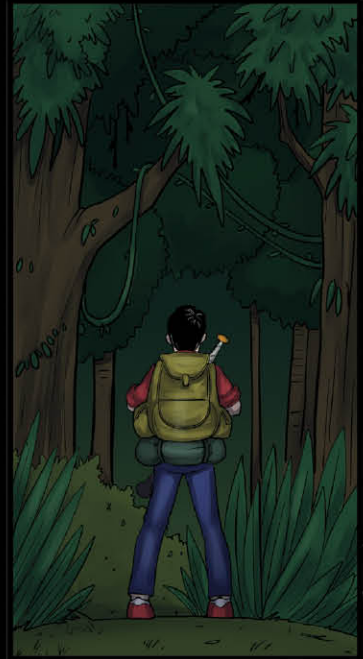








THIS IS IT, NO
TURNING BACK
NOW.



IT'S
SHOWTIME!



GENESIS

ACT TWO: WHOLE NEW WORLD

ALRIGHT BRACE YOURSELF.
WE'RE ENTERING UNKNOWN
TERRITORIES.



IT'S
FILLED
WITH
DANGER--

--TROUBLE--

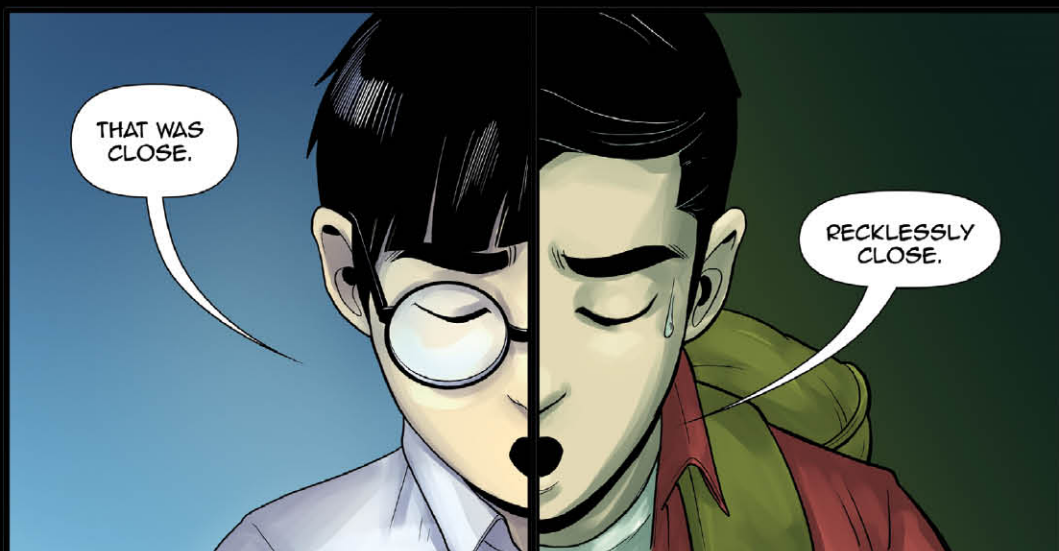
--AND DREAD.

DO
YOU HEAR
THAT?

THE
DRONE IS
PICKING
UP--

MARUL, RUN!!
THERE'S
CHOPPERS
NEARBY!
THEY CAN SEE
YOU!





FARHAN...
WHERE EVER YOU ARE, I
HOPE YOU'RE SLEEPING
WELL



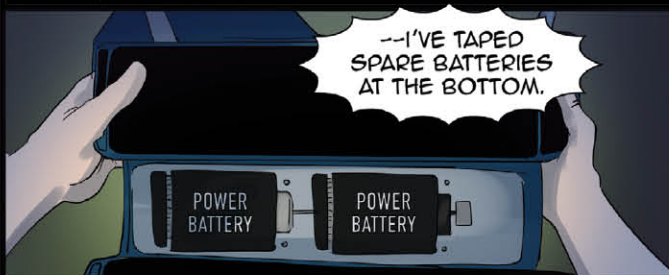
CHARGE UP.
LITERALLY.



COULD YOU ALSO
HELP ME SWAP
BATTERIES FOR THE
DRONE--



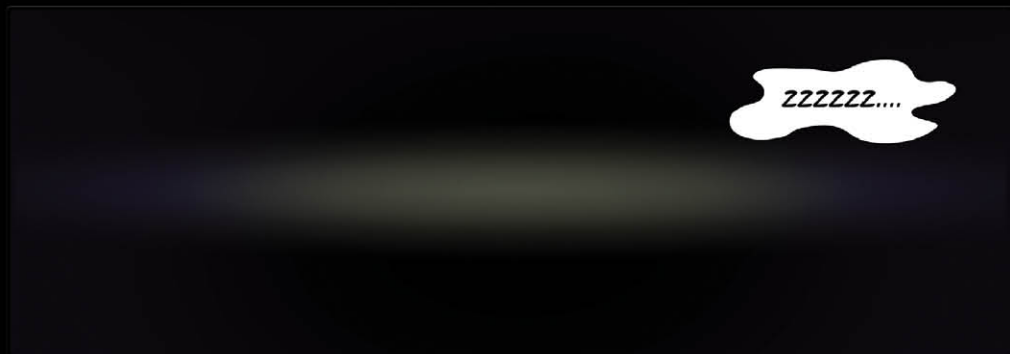
--I'VE TAPED
SPARE BATTERIES
AT THE BOTTOM.



YAWN



ZZZZZZZ....



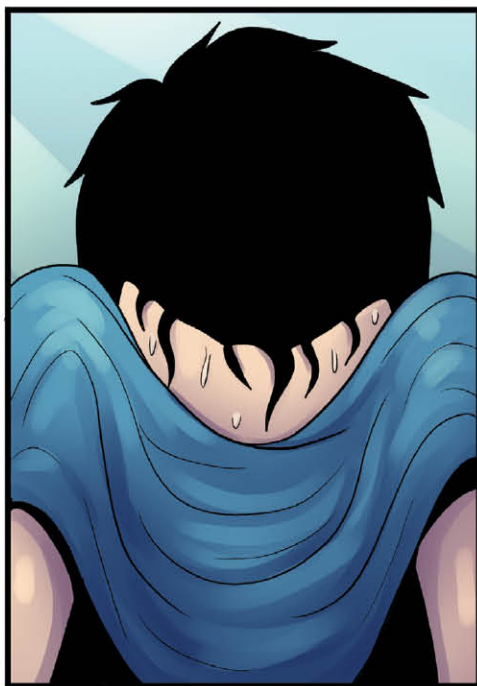
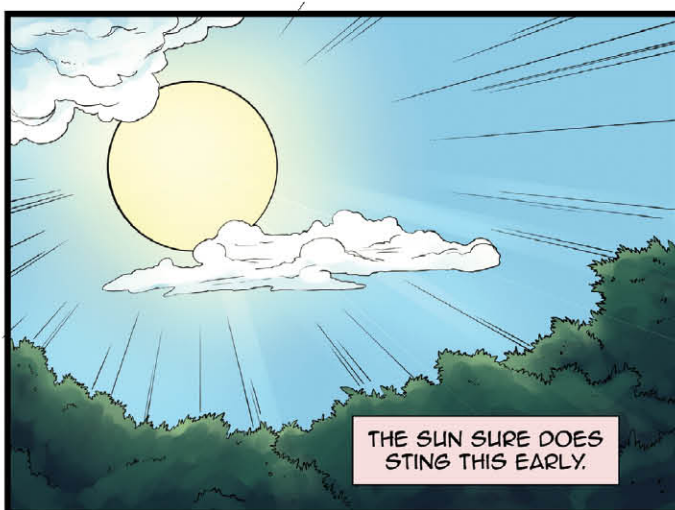
MARUL?

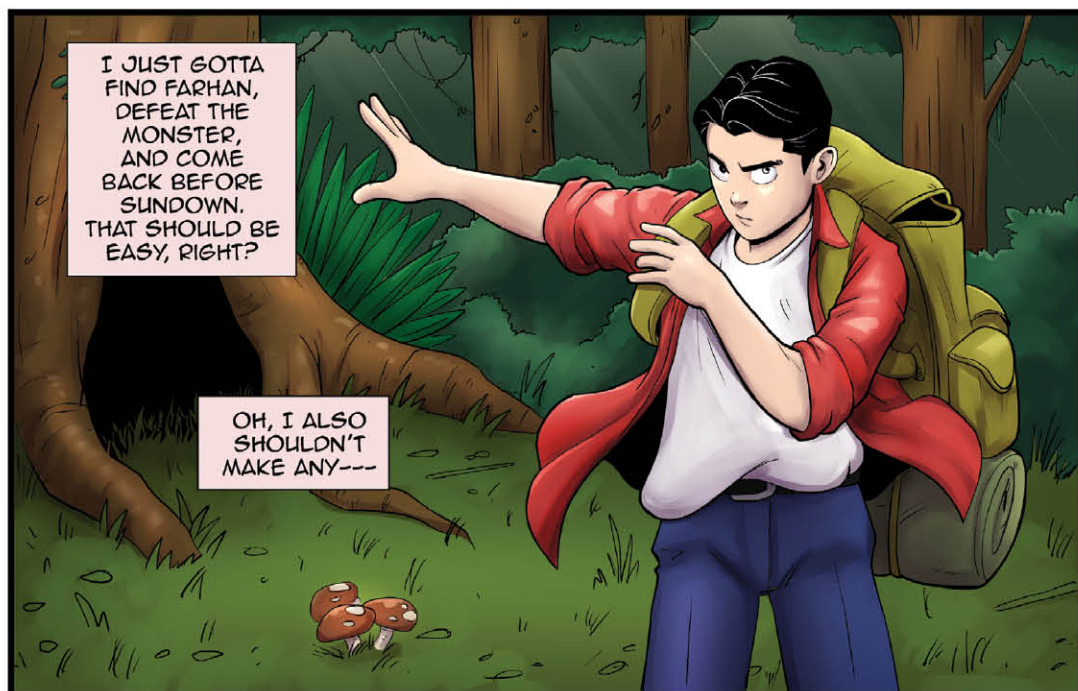
MARUL,
IS
THAT
YOU?

MARUL,
PLEASE
HELP!

IT'S
GOT ME,
MARUL!

FARHAN!





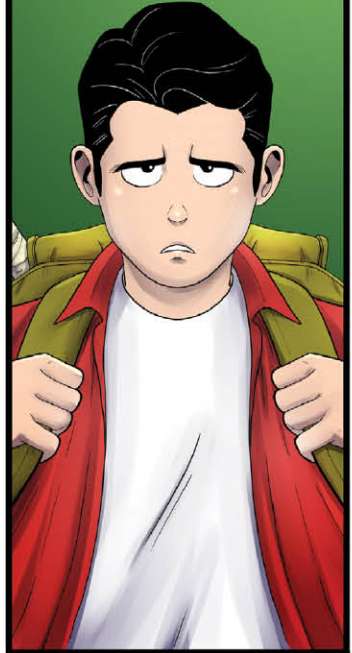


AT THE RATE I'M
MAKING SOUNDS...
MY CHANCES ARE
GETTING SLIMMER.

STILL,
I SHOULD
MOVE.



THIRTY MINUTES
LATER....



I SHOULD
HAVE BOUGHT
MORE FOOD.



WAIT,
WHAT
IS
THAT?!



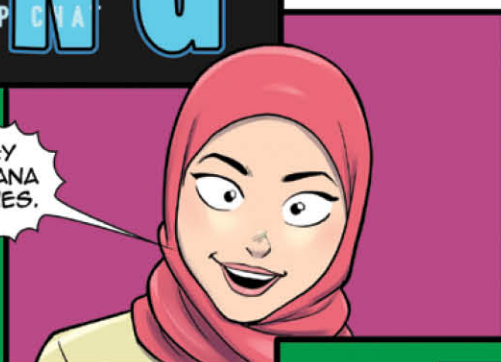


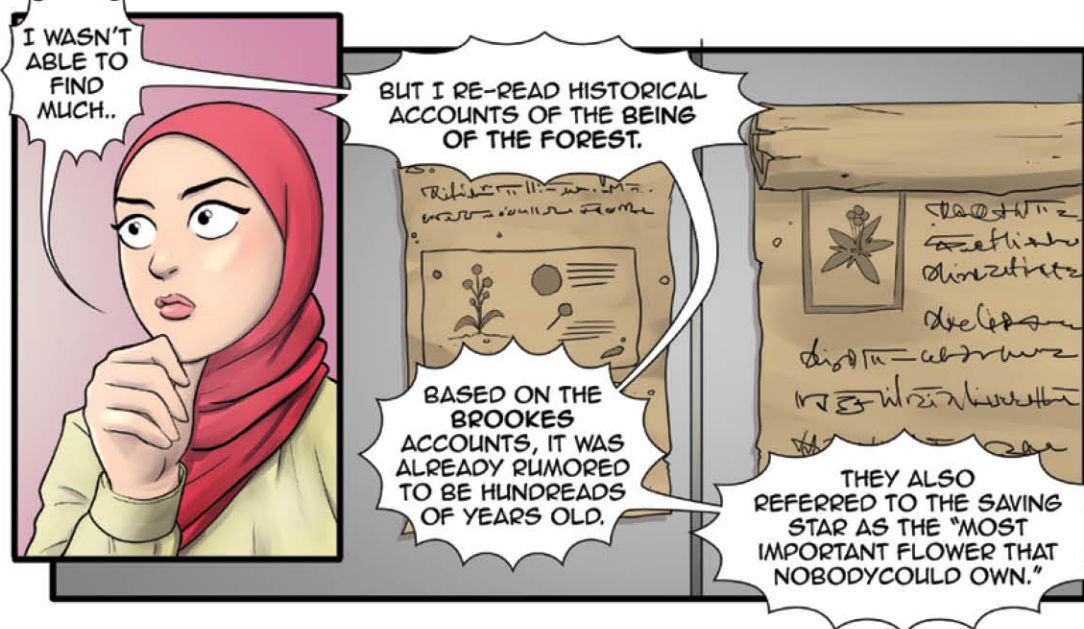
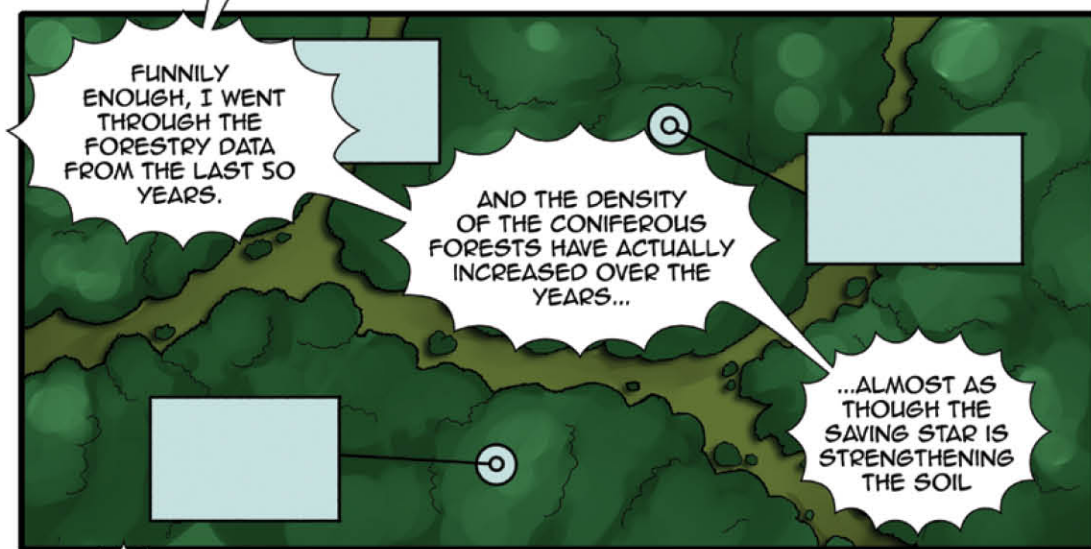
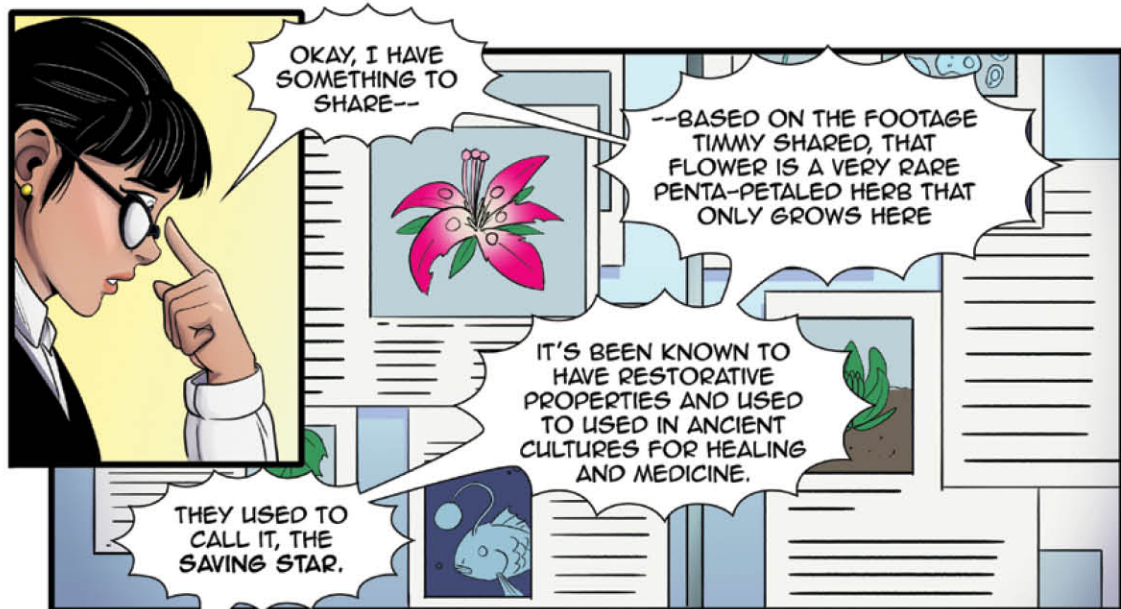




PING

MARUL INVITED TO GROUP CHAT







THAT'S A LOT OF INFORMATION. THANKS GUYS. QUESTION IS... WHERE DO I GO?

WELL ACCORDING TO THE HISTORICAL ACCOUNTS, THE BEING MADE IT'S HOME "...WHERE THE SUN AND THE MOON SHONE THE BRIGHTEST."



I LOVE AND HATE RIDDLES. THE SUN AND THE MOON WOULD BE THE BRIGHTEST IN A CLEAR OPEN SKY.



NOT NECESSARILY, THE SUN PRODUCES IT'S OWN LIGHT AND THE MOON JUST REFLECTS IT.

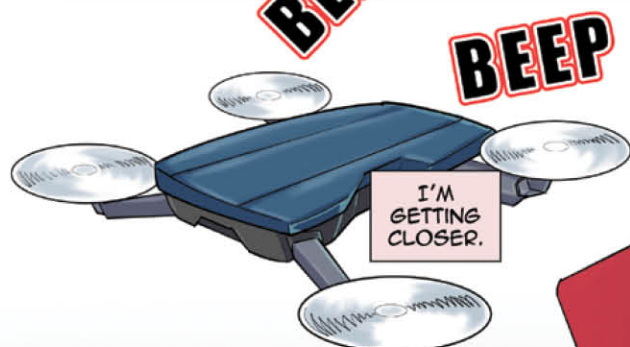
WAIT A MINUTE. REFLECTION. THE SUN AND THE MOON WOULD SHINE BRIGHTEST IF THEIR REFLECTIONS WERE BRIGHT.



X

WATER! WATER WOULD REFLECT THEIR LIGHT!

BINGO! THERE IS AN OPEN CANOPY RIGHT NEAR AN ESTUARY! MARUL WE GOT IT!



FARHAN...
PLEASE BE
SAFE.



PLEASE...
I CAN'T BEAR
THE THOUGHT OF
ANYTHING
HAPPENING
TO YOU.









"--MARUL
IS ON HIS
OWN."



THE
DRONE
ISN'T
WORKING.
I HAVE NO
RECEPTION



I CAN'T
PANIC. I'M
SO CLOSE.



I JUST
GOTTA STAY
FOCUSED--

KERRAAC



WHAT
WAS
THAT?



I HOPE I'M
GOING THE
RIGHT WAY.



OH NO.
OH NO.
THERE
ISN'T--



THAT VOICE--

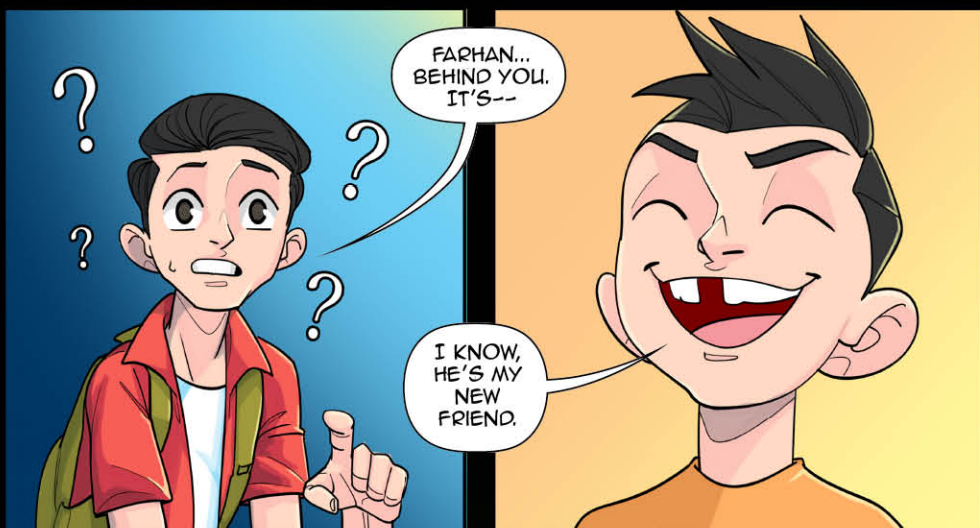
FARHAN?

FOUND
YOU!!



DO YOU
BELIEVE ME
NOW?

I MUST BE
DREAMING.



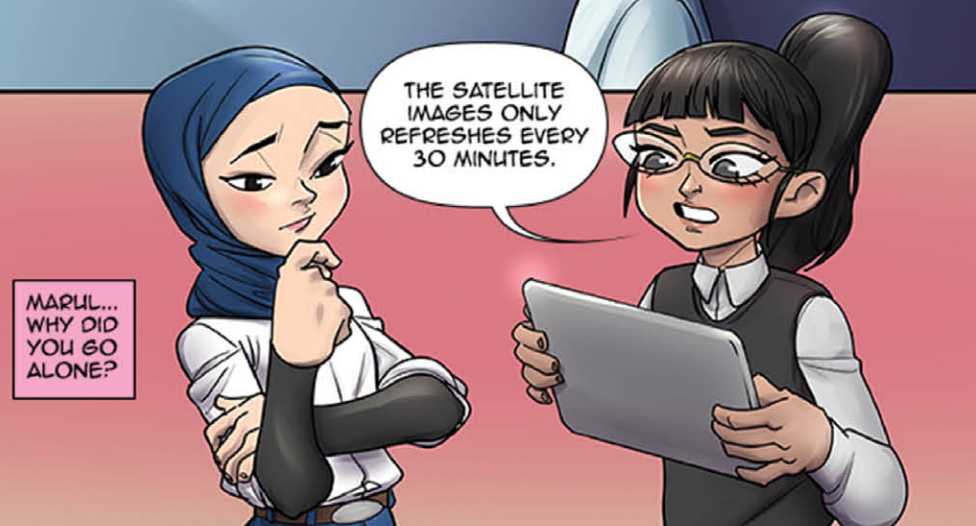
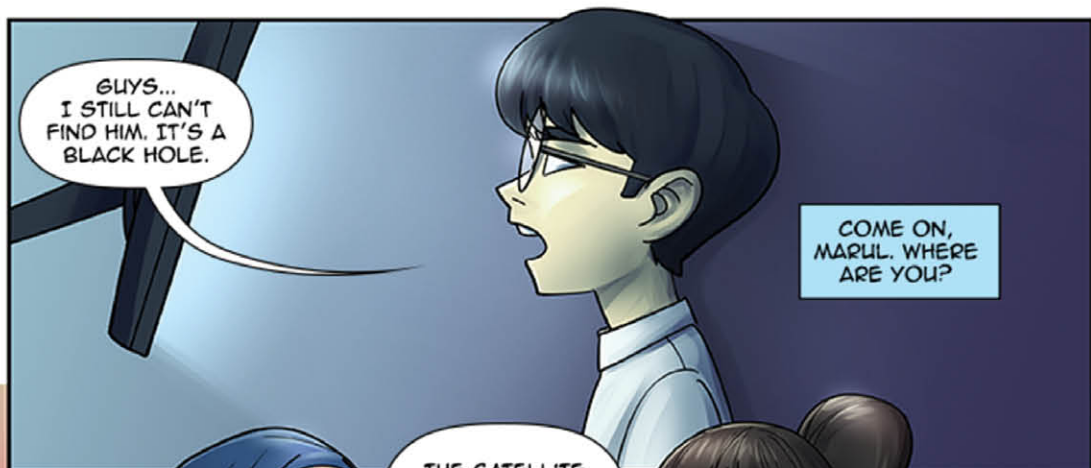
YOU HAVE GOT TO
BE KIDDING ME.

EVEN
GINGER IS
FRIENDS
WITH THIS
THING.

WAS I
WORRIED FOR
NOTHING?







WHOA.
I'M--

--AM I
IN HIS MIND?

YES.
THIS IS MY
STORY.

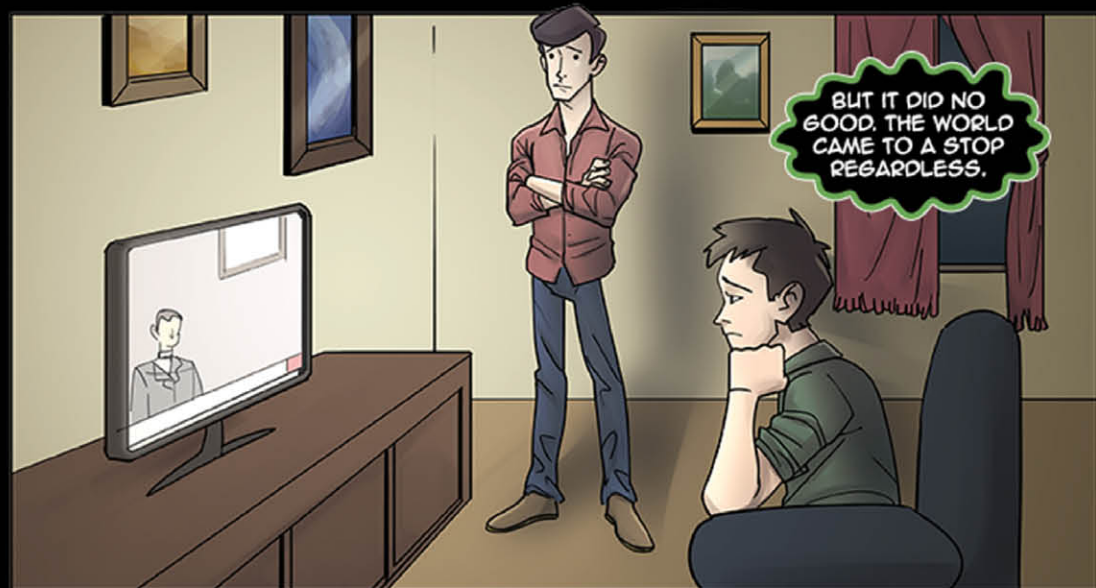
IS THAT
YOU?

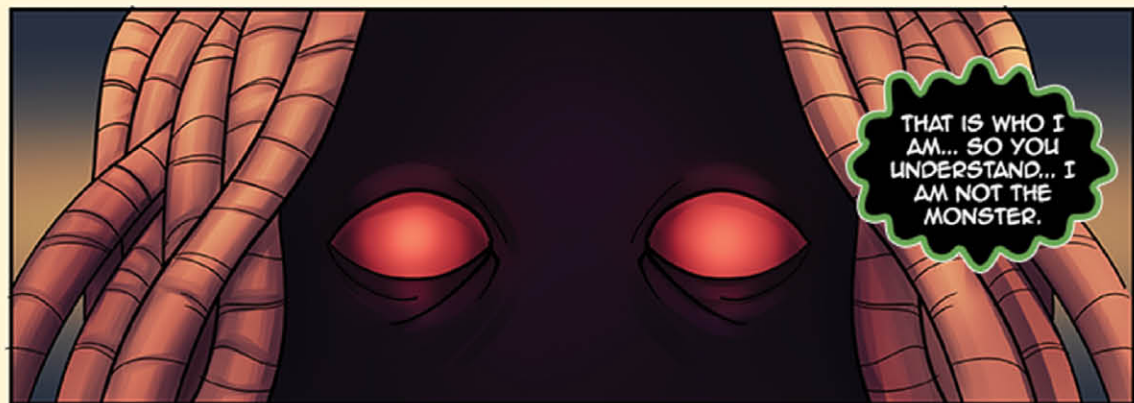
NO. HE WAS
THE GUARDIAN
BEFORE ME.

WE HAVE
BEEN WATCHING THE FOREST
SINCE THE FIRST VISITORS
ARRIVED.

WHEN THE NEXT
VISITORS ARRIVED... I LOST
MY GUARDIAN. HE WAS... MY
FATHER.

AS THE WORLD STARTED
DESTROYING MY HOME... I WENT
INTO HIDING. PROTECTING OUR
GREEN AS MUCH AS I COULD





THAT IS WHO I
AM... SO YOU
UNDERSTAND... I
AM NOT THE
MONSTER.



HE'S RIGHT.
WE'VE DESTROYED
HIS HOME. THIS
EARTH.



THANK YOU FOR
SHOWING ME THAT.
I AM SORRY FOR
YOUR PAIN.

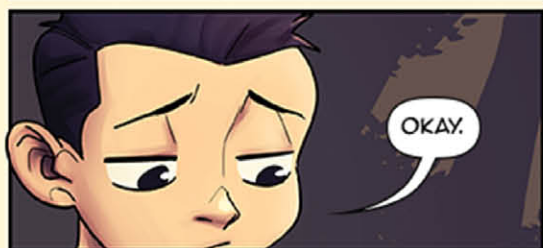


FARHAN
LOOKS SO
HAPPY HERE...
HAPPIER THAN
I'VE SEEN HIM
IN A LONG
TIME.

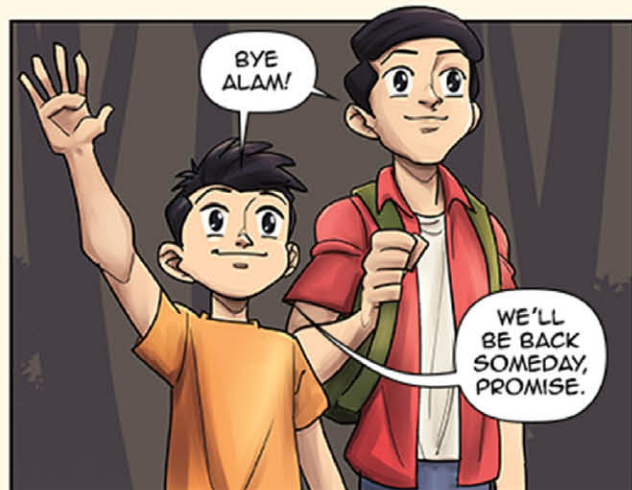
BUT WE CAN'T STAY
HERE. THIS IS ALAM'S
PLACE. WE'VE
INTERRUPTED HIM
ENOUGH.



FARHAN... WE
SHOULD GO.
IT'S GETTING
LATE.



OKAY.





I CAN'T BELIEVE THIS JUST HAPPENED.

IT'S SO EASY TO JUDGE SOMEONE OR SOMETHING JUST BECAUSE OTHER PEOPLE SAY THINGS ABOUT THEM.

AND LIFE CAN SURPRISE YOU BY PROVING THEY'RE THE COMPLETE OPPOSITE OF EVERYTHING YOU HAD HEARD.

EVERYONE KEPT SAYING ALAM WAS A MONSTER, AND YET HE WAS ONE OF THE NICEST CREATURES TO EXIST.



ARE YOU HUNGRY?

YES AND NO

ALAM GAVE ME SOME FRUITS BUT I KINDA WANT A BURGER

THAT FEELS A BIT TOO SOON...

ERR... WHY DON'T WE EAT SOMETHING ELSE?

LIKE CUP NOODLES?

OKAY, I GUESS...

I'VE MISSED YOU-



WHAT IS THAT?!

FRESH FRESH

I HEAR VOICES.



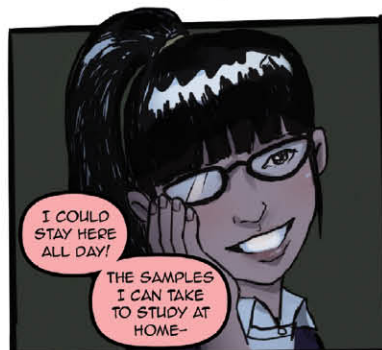
I KNOW THOSE VOICES...



THEY SHOULD BE THIS WAY...



I THINK THEY'RE CLOSE...



I COULD STAY HERE ALL DAY!

THE SAMPLES I CAN TAKE TO STUDY AT HOME-





THE NEWS OF
YOUR AND FARHAN'S
DISAPPEARANCE
WENT PUBLIC

YOUR HELPER
ALERTED THE
TOWNSPEOPLE—



AN INITIAL
GROUP FOUND
THE **STRANGE**
FLOWERS

AND THE
RUMORS OF
THE CREATURE
WENT INTO
OVERRIDE



AND THEN
A LARGER GROUP
ARMED THEMSELVES
AND ARE HEADED
THERE

THEY DON'T
HAVE THE
TRAIL THAT WE
DO

SO WE BEAT
THEM HERE TO
FIND YOU

BUT THEY'RE
COMING
CLOSE



GUYS, YOU
GUYS HAVE
TO **HELP ME**

HELP HIM

WITHOUT HIM
AND WITHOUT
THIS FOREST,
WE WILL ALL
SUFFER!



ALAM IS
INNOCENT

WE HAVE
TO GET TO
HIM BEFORE
THEY DO



I SORTA
PREPARED
FOR THIS.



I SENT OUT A
FAKE MESSAGE
CHAIN BEFORE
COMING HERE

⚠️ EMERGENCY
WATER DISRUPTION
AT 7PM
BE PREPARED

I SENT OUT A **FAKE**
MESSAGE THAT **THE**
WATER SUPPLY MAY
GET DISRUPTED, SO
HOPEFULLY SOME OF
THEM HEAD BACK



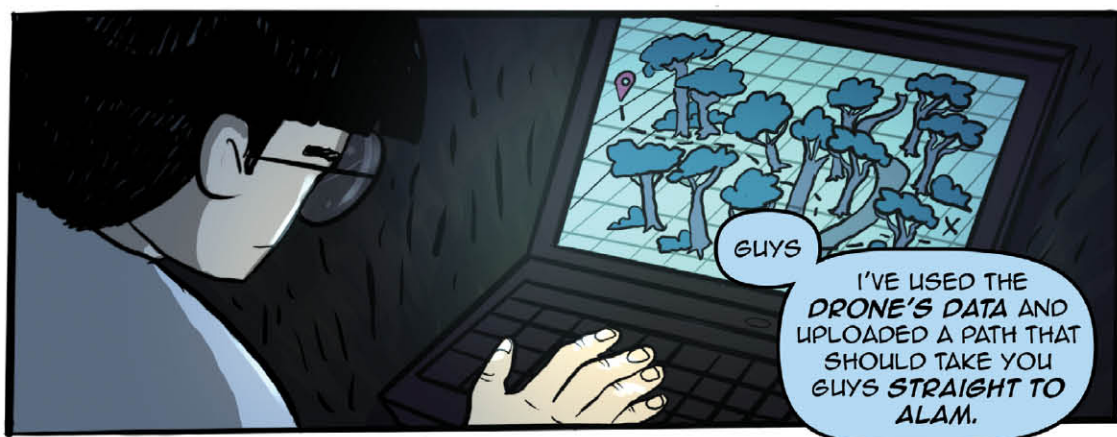
DID YOU
GET IT
TOO?

⚠️
EMERGENCY
WATER
DISRUPTION
AT 7PM
BE
PREPARED

YEAH

SHOULD WE
HEAD BACK?





I'VE USED THE
DRONE'S DATA AND
UPLOADED A PATH THAT
SHOULD TAKE YOU
GUYS STRAIGHT TO
ALAM.



OH NO...

GENESIS

FINALE: BRAVE NEW WORLD

GUYS...

WE WERE
TOO LATE...

This doesn't
look good...

ALAM-

-WHERE ARE YOU?

THIS WAY!

OH MY-

GUYS...

HE'S-

ALAM!

FARHAN, DON'T GO CLOSE!

IT'S NOT SAFE!

LET'S GO THROUGH THE STREAM, WE SHOULD BE SAFE FROM THE FIRES

GUYS, IT'S NOT LOOKING GOOD...

SPLASH

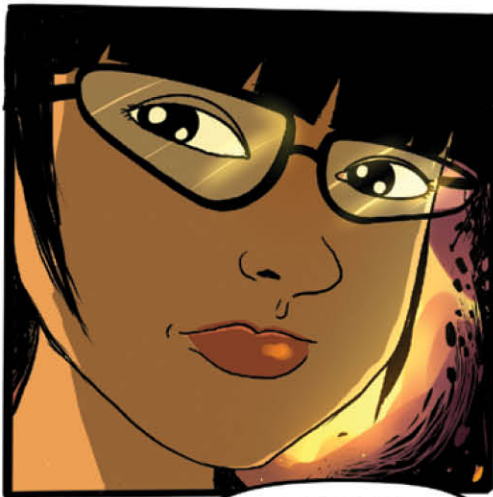
ALAM!

PLEASE WAKE UP!

I'M SO SORRY, FARHAN

TSSSS

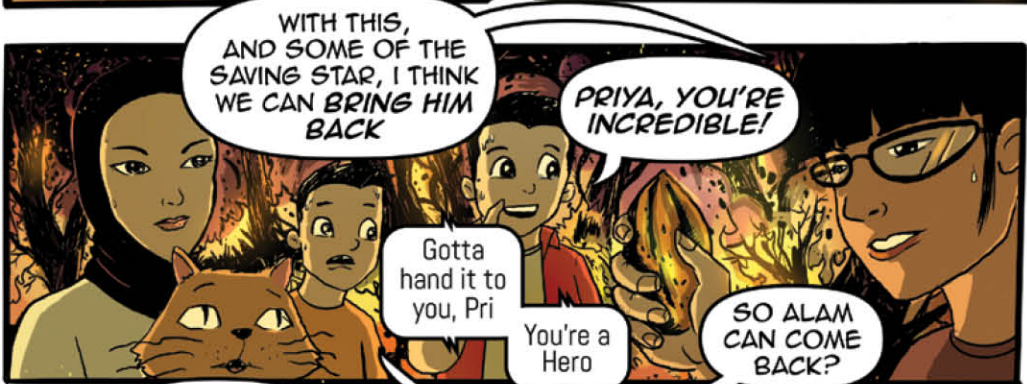




AND VOILA!

EW, THAT'S ICKY...

BUT I CAN'T MAKE IT OBVIOUS, THIS MY MOMENT



WITH THIS, AND SOME OF THE SAVING STAR, I THINK WE CAN BRING HIM BACK

PRIYA, YOU'RE INCREDIBLE!

Gotta hand it to you, Pri

You're a Hero

SO ALAM CAN COME BACK?



LET'S HOPE, FARHAN.

BUT FIRST-

WE SHOULD GO!

I'M SCARED

THE FIRE'S GETTING CLOSER!

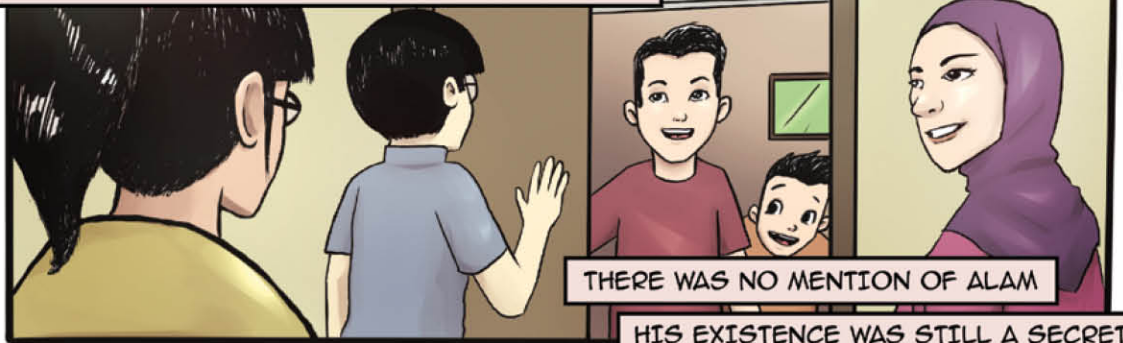


KERKAKKKK

THIS WAY, GUYS!

A COUPLE OF WEEKS LATER...

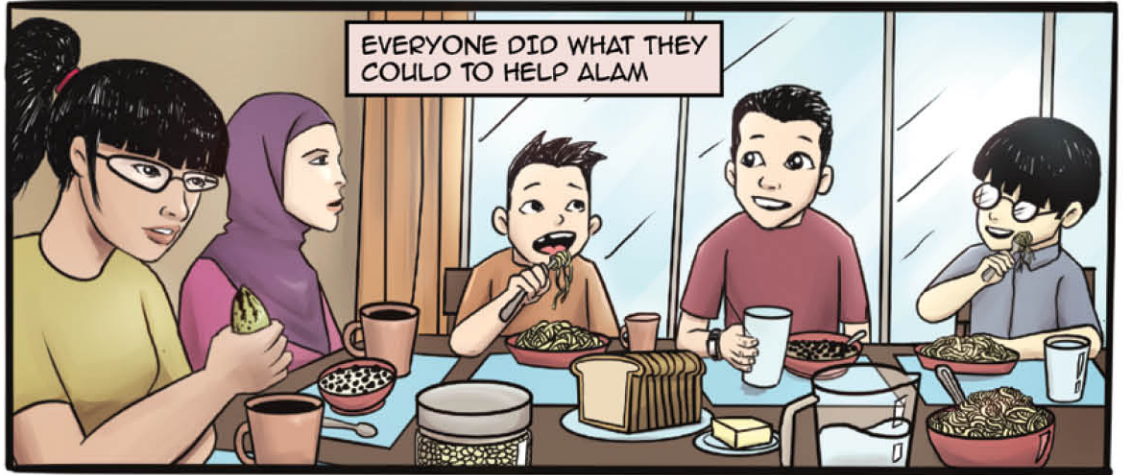
AFTER THE FOREST BURNED DOWN, WE SPENT A COUPLE OF WEEKS LISTENING TO THE NEWS



THERE WAS NO MENTION OF ALAM

HIS EXISTENCE WAS STILL A SECRET

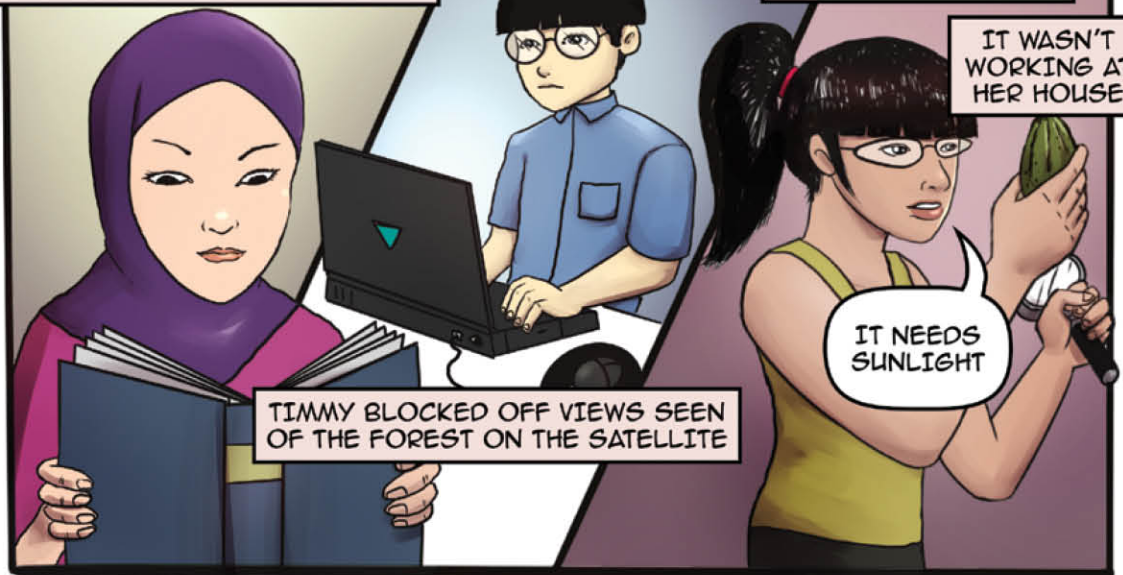
EVERYONE DID WHAT THEY COULD TO HELP ALAM



LINA LOOKED INTO WAYS TO CONTINUE KEEPING HIS SECRET

AND PRIYA WAS HARD AT WORK TRYING TO RESTORE THE SEED

IT WASN'T WORKING AT HER HOUSE



TIMMY BLOCKED OFF VIEWS SEEN OF THE FOREST ON THE SATELLITE

IT NEEDS SUNLIGHT

PRIYA HAD A
CRAZY IDEA.

SO SHE SNUCK
BACK TO ALAM'S
SPOT AND PLANTED
IT THERE.

A FEW WEEKS
LATER, SHE TOLD
US THE NEWS.

SO WE ALL
SNUCK IN
THERE.

WE WERE ALL
VERY NERVOUS

WE WEREN'T
SURE WHAT
TO EXPECT

OH MY-

IT'S
HIM!

WE WERE
ALL
STUNNED

WATCHING
ALAM
REBORN
GAVE ME
HOPE...

THAT IF
HE CAN
BE
BROUGHT
BACK...

THAT
MAYBE
OUR
PLANET
ISN'T
BEYOND
SAVING
EITHER.

THAT MAYBE WE SHOULD TREAT OUR EARTH
AS DELICATELY AS PRIYA TREATED ALAM

SOMETIMES ALL IT TAKES
IS A SINGLE SEED.

THE END



YOUNG SOUTHEAST ASIAN LEADERS INITIATIVE

The *Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative (YSEALI)* is a program by the U.S. Department of State to strengthen leadership development and networking in Southeast Asia. It is open to citizens of the 11 ASEAN nations aged 18-35. Through a variety of programs and engagements, including U.S. educational and cultural exchanges, regional exchanges, and seed funding, YSEALI seeks to build the leadership capabilities of youth in the region, strengthen ties between the United States and Southeast Asia, and nurture a community of leaders who work across borders.

YSEALI focuses on critical topics identified by youth in the region:

education, civic engagement, environment and natural resources management, and entrepreneurship and economic development.



The programs offered under YSEALI are:

- 1. YSEALI Professional Fellowships:** Month-long mentorship and job shadowing programs at businesses, NGOs, and government offices in the United States.
- 2. YSEALI Academic Fellowships:** Intensive study programs focusing on leadership and global issues at American campuses.
- 3. YSEALI Academy at Fulbright:** Executive-level seminars for entry- to mid-level professionals focused on technology and innovation, public policy, and entrepreneurship at the YSEALI

campus at Fulbright University Vietnam.

- 4. YSEALI Regional Workshops:** Deliver hands-on training for ASEAN youth, giving them the tools necessary to actively lead their communities while connecting them to each other and the United States.
- 5. YSEALI Seeds for the Future:** Offers seed funding for young leaders to implement their innovative ideas for regional challenges.

Bruneian alumni of YSEALI programs have gone on to lead civil society organizations focused on the environment, project management, media engagement, and combating trafficking in persons. YSEALI members also express their ideas and connect with the United States and each other through YSEALI's social media platforms.

For more info on YSEALI, please go to <https://asean.usmission.gov/yseali/> or for Brunei-specific info, visit <https://bn.usembassy.gov/education-culture/yseali/> or email: yseali_bsb@state.gov.



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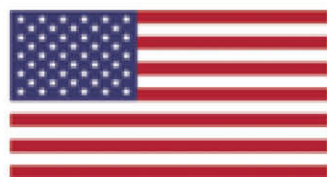


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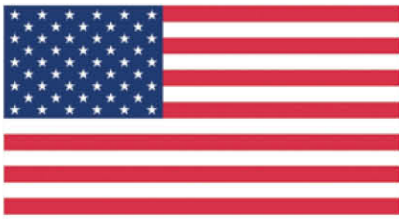
Connect with the U.S. Embassy in Brunei Darussalam!

The U.S. Embassy hopes you enjoyed reading Genesis as much as we did! This comic book project was funded through the U.S. Embassy's Small Grants Program, which supports organizations across Brunei to implement innovative initiatives that advance our shared values on themes such as the environment, civil society development, culture, the arts, journalism and entrepreneurship. Past projects we have funded include an art competition dealing with mental health issues during the COVID lockdown, a webinar series on the legal rights of women and girls, a series of events to raise awareness of indigenous cultures, and an environmental camp to introduce young people to the fragility of marine ecosystems. If you have a socially impactful idea that deserves funding, please visit our website to learn how to apply for the Small Grants Program.



Best wishes from the U.S. Embassy's Public Diplomacy Section
Jeff Barrus, Shova Thapa, Mayra Robles, Billah Hasan and Leng May Low

For more information, visit: BN.USEMBASSY.GOV



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"The Genesis Project was funded by a grant from the United States Department of State. The opinions, findings and conclusions stated herein are those of the author[s] and do not necessarily reflect those of the United States Department of State."